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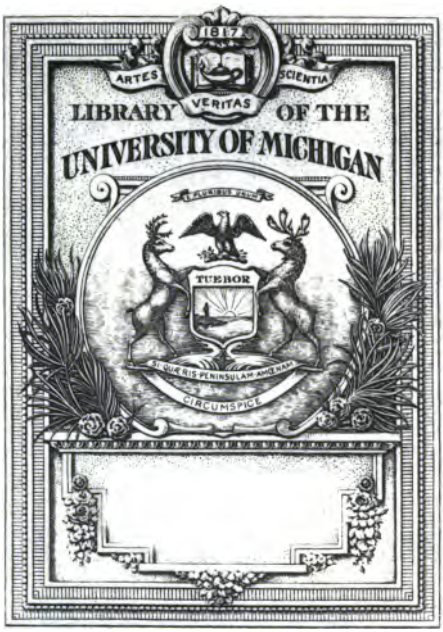

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By Henry D. Thoreau

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THE WRITINGS OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU

WITH BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTIONS AND FULL INDEXES

VOLUME VIII

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WINTER

FROM THE JOURNAL OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU

EDITED BY

H. G. O. BLAKE

Knowledge means
Ever-renewed assurance by defeat
That victory is somehow still to reach;
But love is victory, the prize itself.
BROWNING.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

To those who are not specially interested in the character of Thoreau, who regard him merely as a writer who has sometimes expressed original thoughts in a happy way, who has made some interesting observations of natural phenomena, and at times written beautifully about nature, it may seem hardly worth while to publish more of his journal. But from time to time I meet with or receive letters from persons who feel the same deep interest in him as an individual, in his thoughts and views of life, that I do, and who, I am sure, will eagerly welcome any additional expression of that individuality. Of course there are many such persons of whom I do not hear.

Thoreau himself regarded literature as altogether secondary to life, strange as this may seem to those who think of him as a hermit or dreamer, shunning what are commonly considered as among the most important practical realities, trade, politics, the church, the institutions of society generally. He took little part in

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these things because he believed they would stand in the way of his truest life, and to attain that, as far as possible, he knew to be his first business in the world. Even in a philanthropic point of view, any superficial benefit he might confer by throwing himself into the current of society would be as nothing compared with the loss of real power and influence which would result from disobedience to his highest instincts. "Ice that merely performs the office of a burning glass does not do its duty." It was not sufficient for him to entertain and express as an author "subtle thoughts," but he aspired rather "so to love wisdom as to live, according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust," "to solve some of the problems of life not only theoretically, but practically." It is the clear insight early creating a deep, persistent determination so to live, rather than his genius, which gives value to Thoreau's work, though this insight itself may well be regarded as the highest form of genius. It is the attitude one takes toward the world, far more than any abilities he may possess, which gives significance to his life. It has been well said by Brownlee Brown that "courage, piety, wit, zeal, learning, eloquence, avail nothing, unless the man is right."

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As the young pass out of childhood, that foretaste or symbol of the kingdom of heaven, the expression of serene innocence is too apt to fade from their faces and the clouds to gather there, while it is considered a matter of course that each one should attach himself to the social machine. One becomes a lawyer, another a clergyman, another a physician, another a merchant, and the treasure which the childlike soul has lost is sought to be regained in some general and far-off way by society at large. But the burden which men thus readily take upon themselves in the common race for comfort, luxury, and social position is out of all proportion to their spiritual vitality, and so the truest life of individuals is being continually sacrificed to the Juggernaut of society. Men associate almost universally in the shallower and falser part of their natures, so that while institutions may seem to flourish, corruption is also gaining ground through the spiritual failure of individuals; finally the fabric falls, and a new form rises to go through the same round. The highest form of civilization at the present day seems to be an advance upon all that have preceded it, though in some particulars it plainly falls behind. Perhaps only by this alternate rising and falling can the human race advance.

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But the progress of individuals is the essential thing; only so far as that takes place will the real progress of the race follow, and those persons contribute most to this real progress who, stepping aside from the ordinary routine, give us by their lives and thoughts a new sense of the reality of what is best, of the ideal towards which all civilization must aim; who are so in love with truth, rectitude, and the beauty of the world, including in this, first of all, the original, unimpaired beauty of the human soul, that they have little care for material prosperity, social position, or public opinion. It was not merely nature in the ordinary sense, plants, animals, the landscape, etc., which attracted Thoreau. He is continually manifesting a human interest in natural objects, and thoughts of an ideal friendship are forever haunting him. Touching the highest and fairest relation of one human soul to another, I do not believe there can be found in literature, ancient or modern, anything finer, anything which comes closer home to our best experience, than what appears in Thoreau's writings generally, and especially in "Wednesday" of the "Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers."

THE EDITOR.

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WINTER.

December 21, 1851. My difficulties with my friends are such as no frankness will settle. There is no precept in the New Testament that will assist me. . . . Others can confess and explain, I cannot. It is not that I am too proud. But explanation is not what is wanted. Friendship is the unspeakable joy and blessing that result to two or more individuals who from constitution sympathize. Such natures are liable to no mistakes, but will know each other through thick and thin. Between two by nature alike and fitted to sympathize there is no veil, and there can be no obstacle. Who are the estranged? Two friends explaining.

I feel sometimes as if I could say to my friends, "My friends, I am aware how I have outraged you, how I have seemingly preferred hate to love, seemingly treated others kindly and you unkindly, sedulously concealed my love, and sooner or later expressed all and more than all my hate." I can imagine how I might utter

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something like this, in some moment never to be realized, but, at the same time, let me say frankly that I feel I might say it with too little regret, that I am under an awful necessity to be what I am. If the truth were known, which I do not know, I have no concern with those friends whom I misunderstand or who misunderstand me. The fates only are unkind that keep us asunder; but my friend is ever kind. I am of the nature of stone. It takes the summer's sun to warm it. — My acquaintances sometimes imply that I am too cold, but each thing is warm enough for its kind. Is the stone too cold which absorbs the heat of the summer sun, and does not part with it during the night? Crystals, though they be of ice, are not too cold to melt; it was in melting that they were formed. Cold! I am most sensible of warmth in winter days. It is not the warmth of fire that you would have; everything is warm or cold according to its nature. It is not that I am too cold, but that our warmth and coldness are not of the same nature. Hence when I am absolutely warmest, I may be coldest to you. Crystal does not complain of crystal any more than the dove of its mate. You who complain that I am cold, find Nature cold. To me she is warm. My heat is latent to you. Fire itself is cold to whatever is not of a nature to be

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warmed by it. . . . That I am cold means that I am of another nature. . . .

How swiftly the earth appears to revolve at sunset, — which at midday appears to rest on its axis.

Dec. 21, 1853. We are tempted to call these the finest days of the year. Take Fair Haven Pond, for instance, a perfectly level plain of snow, untrodden as yet by any fisherman, surrounded by snow-clad hills, dark, evergreen woods, and reddish oak leaves, so pure and still. The last rays of the sun falling on Baker Farm reflect a clear pink color. — I see the feathers of a partridge strewn along on the snow for a long distance, the work of some hawk, perhaps, for there is no track.

What a groveling appetite for profitless jest and amusement our countrymen have! Next to a good dinner, at least, they love a good joke, to have their sides tickled, to laugh sociably, as in the East they bathe and are shampooed. Curators of Lyceums write to me,

Dear Sir, — I hear that you have a lecture of some humor. Will you do us the favor to read it before the Bungtown Institute?

Dec. 22, 1851. If I am thus seemingly cold compared with my companion's warm, who knows but mine is a less transient glow, a steadier and more equable heat, like that of the

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earth in spring, in which the flowers spring and expand. It is not words that I wish to hear or to utter, but relations that I wish to stand in, and it oftener happens, methinks, I go away unmet, unrecognized, ungreeted in my offered relation, than that you are disappointed of words.

I have seen in the form, in the expression of face, of a child three years old the tried magnanimity and grave nobility of ancient and departed worthies. I saw a little Irish boy, come from the distant shanty in the woods over the bleak rail-road to school this morning, take his last step from the last snow-drift on to the school-house door-step, floundering still, saw not his face nor his profile, only his mien; I imagined, saw clearly in imagination, his old worthy face behind the sober visor of his cap. Ah! this little Irish boy, I know not why, revives to my mind the worthies of antiquity. He is not drawn, he never was drawn, in a willow wagon. He progresses by his own brave steps. Has not the world waited for such a generation? Here he condescends to his a b c, without one smile, who has the lore of worlds uncounted in his brain. He speaks not of the adventures of the causeway. What was the bravery of Leonidas and his three hundred boys at the Pass of Thermopylæ to this infant's! They but dared to die,

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he dares to live, and take his "reward of merit," perchance (without relaxing his face into a smile), that overlooks his unseen and unregardable merits. Little Johnny Riorden, who faces cold and routs it like a Persian army. While the charitable waddle about cased in furs, he, lively as a cricket, passes them on his way to school.

Dec. 22, 1852. Surveying the Hunt farm. A rambling, rocky, wild, moorish pasture this of Hunt's, with two or three great white oaks to shade the cattle, which the farmer would not take fifty dollars apiece for, though the shipbuilder wanted them.

It is pleasant, as you are cutting a path through a swamp, to see the color of the different woods, the yellowish dogwood, the green prinos (?), and on the upland, the splendid yellow barberry. . . . You cannot go out so early but you will find the track of some wild creature.

Returning home just after the sun had sunk below the horizon, I saw from N. Barrett's a fire made by boys on the ice near the Red bridge which looked like the bright reflection of the setting sun from the water under the bridge, so clear, so little lurid in this winter evening.

Dec. 22, 1858. P. M. To Walden. I see in

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the cut near the shanty site quite a flock of *Fringilla hyemalis* and goldfinches *together* on the snow and weeds and ground. Hear the well-known mew and watery twitter of the last, and the drier "chill chill" of the former. These burning yellow birds, with a little black and white in their coat flaps, look warm above the snow. There may be thirty goldfinches, very brisk and pretty tame. They hang, head downwards, on the weeds. I hear of their coming to pick sunflower seeds in Melvin's garden these days.

Dec. 22, 1859. Another fine winter day. — P. M. To Flint's Pond. . . . We pause and gaze into the Mill brook on the Turnpike bridge. I see a good deal of cress there on the bottom for a rod or two, the only green thing to be seen. . . . Is not this the plant which most, or most conspicuously, preserves its greenness in the winter? . . . It is as green as ever, and waving in the stream as in summer.

How nicely is Nature adjusted. The least disturbance of her equilibrium is betrayed and corrects itself. As I looked down on the surface of the brook, I was surprised to see a leaf floating, as I thought, up stream, but I was mistaken. The motion of a particle of dust on the surface of any brook far inland shows which way the earth declines toward the sea, which

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way lies the constantly descending route, and the only one.

I see in the chestnut woods near Flint's Pond where squirrels have collected the small chestnut burs left on the trees, and opened them generally at the base of the trunks on the snow. These are, I think, all small and imperfect burs, which do not so much as open in the fall, and are rejected then, but hanging on the tree, they have this use, at least, as the squirrels' winter food. . . .

The fisherman stands still and erect on the ice, awaiting our approach, as usual forward to say that he has had no luck. He has been here since early morning, and for some reason or other he has had no luck; the fishes won't bite, you won't catch him here again in a hurry. They all tell the same story. The amount of it is, he has had "fisherman's luck," and if you walk that way, you may find him at his old post to-morrow. It is hard, to be sure; four little fishes to be divided between three men, and two and a half miles to walk; and you have only got a more ravenous appetite for the supper which you have not earned. However, the pond floor is not a bad place whereon to spend a winter day.

Dec. 23, 1837. Crossed the river to-day on the ice. Though the weather is raw and win

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try, and the ground covered with snow, I noticed a solitary robin. . . .

In the side of the high bank by the leaning hemlock there were some curious crystallizations. Wherever the water or other cause had formed a hole in the bank, its throat and outer edge, like the entrance to a citadel of the olden time, bristled with a glistening ice armor. In one place you might see minute ostrich feathers which seemed the waving plumes of the warriors filing into the fortress, in another, the glancing fan-shaped banners of the Liliputian host, and in another, the needle-shaped particles collected into bundles resembling the plumes of the pine, might pass for a phalanx of spears. The whole hill was like an immense quartz rock with minute crystals sparkling from innumerable crannies.

Dec. 23, 1841. The best man's spirit makes a fearful sprite to haunt his tomb. The ghost of a priest is no better than that of a highwayman. It is pleasant to hear of one who has blest whole regions after his death by having frequented them while alive, who has profaned or tabooed no place by being buried in it. It adds not a little to the fame of Little John that his grave was long "celebrous for the yielding of excellent whetstones."

A forest is in all mythologies a sacred place;

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as the oaks among the Druids, and the grove of Egeria, and even in more familiar and common life, as "Barnsdale wood" and "Sherwood." Had Robin Hood no Sherwood to resort to, it would be difficult to invest his story with the charms it has got. It is always the tale that is untold, the deeds done, and the life lived in the unexplored scenery of the wood, that charm us and make us children again, to read his ballads and hear of the greenwood tree.

Dec. 23, 1851. . . . It is a record of the mellow and ripe moments that I would keep. I would not preserve the husk of life, but the kernel. When the cup of life is full and flowing over, preserve some drops as a specimen sample; when the intellect enlightens the heart and the heart warms the intellect.—Thoughts sometimes possess our heads when we are up and about our business which are the exact counterpart of the bad dreams we sometimes have by night, and I think the intellect is equally inert in both cases. Very frequently, no doubt, the thoughts men have are the consequence of something they have eaten or done. Our waking moods and humors are our dreams, but whenever we are truly awake and serene and healthy in all our senses, we have memorable visions. Who that takes up a book wishes for the report of the clogged bowels or the impure blood?

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Dec. 23, 1855. P. M. To Conantum End. A very bright and pleasant day with a remarkably soft wind from a little N. of W. The frost has come out so in the rain of yesterday, that I avoid the muddy plowed fields, and keep on the green ground which shines with moisture. . . .

I admire those old root fences which have almost disappeared from tidy fields, white pine roots got out when the neighboring meadow was a swamp, the monuments of many a revolution. These roots have not penetrated into the ground, but spread over the surface, and having been cut off four or five feet from the stump were hauled off and set up on their edges for a fence. The roots were not merely interwoven, but grown together into solid frames, full of loop-holes like Gothic windows of various sizes and all shapes, triangular, and oval, and harp-like, and the slenderer parts are dry and resonant like harp strings. They are rough and unapproachable, with a hundred snags and horns, which bewilder and balk the calculation of the walker who would surmount them. The part of the trees above ground present no such fantastic forms. Here is one seven paces or more than a rod long, six feet high in the middle, and yet only one foot thick, and two men could turn it up. In this case the roots were six or nine inches thick at the extremities. The roots of pines in swamps

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grow thus in the form of solid frames or rackets, and those of different trees are interwoven withal so that they stand on a very broad foot, and stand or fall together to some extent before the blasts as herds meet the assaults of beasts of prey with serried front. You have thus only to dig into the swamp a little way to find your fence, post, rails, and slats already solidly grown together, and of material more durable than any timber. How pleasing a thought that a field should be fenced with the roots of the trees got out in clearing the land a century before. I regret them as mementos of the primitive forest. The tops of the same trees made into fencing stuff would have decayed generations ago. These roots are singularly unobnoxious to the effects of moisture. . . .

Think of the life of a kitten, ours, for instance. Last night her eyes set in a fit; it is doubtful if she will ever come out of it, and she is set away in a basket and submitted to the recuperative powers of nature; this morning running up the clothes' pole, and erecting her back in frisky sport to every passer.

Dec. 23, 1856. Some savage tribes must share the experience of the lower animals in their relation to man. With what thoughts must the Esquimau manufacture his knife from the rusty hoop of a cask drifted to his shores, not

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a natural, but an artificial product, the work of man's hands, the waste of the commerce of a superior race whom perhaps he never saw!

The cracking of the ground is a phenomenon of the coldest nights. After being waked by the loud cracks of the 18th at Amherst, a man told me in the morning that he had seen a crack running across the plain (I saw it) almost broad enough to put his hand into. This was an exaggeration. It was not one fourth of an inch wide. I saw a great many the same forenoon running across the road in Nashua, every few rods, and also by our house in Concord the same day when I got home. So it seems the ground was cracking all the country over. Partly, no doubt, because there was so little snow, or none. None at Concord.

If the writer would interest readers, he must report so much life, using a certain satisfaction always as a *point d'appui.* However mean and limited, it must be a genuine and contented life that he speaks out of. His readers must have the essence or oil of himself, tried out of the fat of his experience and joy.

Dec. 23, 1860. . . . Larks were about our house the middle of this month.

Dec. 24, 1840. The same sun has not yet shone on me and my friend. He would hardly have to look at me to recognize me, but glimmer

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with half-shut eye like some friendly distant taper when we are benighted. — I do not talk to any intellect in nature, but am presuming an infinite heart somewhere into which I play.

Dec. 24, 1841. I want to go soon and live away by the pond where I shall hear only the wind whispering among the reeds. It will be success if I shall have left myself behind. But my friends ask what I will do when I get there! Will it not be employment enough to watch the progress of the seasons?

Dec. 24, 1850. Saw a shrike pecking to pieces a small bird, apparently a snowbird. At length he took him up in his bill, almost half as big as himself, and flew slowly off with his prey dangling from his beak. I find that I had not associated such actions with my idea of birds. It was not bird-like.

It is never so cold but it melts somewhere. Our mason well remarked that he had sometimes known it to be melting and freezing at the same time on a particular side of a house; while it was melting on the roof, icicles were forming under the eaves. It is always melting and freezing at the same time where icicles are formed.

Our thoughts are with those among the dead into whose sphere we are rising, or who are now rising into our own. Others we inevitably forget, though they be brothers and sisters. Thus

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the departed may be nearer to us than when they were present. At death, our friends and relatives either draw nearer to us, and are found out, or depart farther from us, and are forgotten. Friends are as often brought nearer together as separated by death.

Dec. 24, 1853. . . . Walden almost entirely open again. Skated across Flint's Pond, for the most part smooth, but with rough spots where the rain had not melted the snow. From the hill beyond I get an arctic view N. W. The mountains are of a cold slate color. It is as if they bounded the continent toward Behring's Straits.

In Weston's field in springy land on the edge of a swamp I counted thirty-three or four of those large silvery brown cocoons within a rod or two, and probably there are many more; about a foot from the ground, commonly on the main stem, though sometimes on a branch close to the stem, of the alder, sweet fern, brake, etc. The largest are four inches long by two and one half wide, bag-shaped and wrinkled, and partly concealed by dry leaves, alder, fern, etc., attached, as if sprinkled over them. This evidence of cunning in so humble a creature is affecting, for I am not ready to refer it to an intelligence which the creature does not share, as much as we do the prerogative of reason. This radiation of the brain! The bare silvery

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cocoon would otherwise be too obvious. The worm has evidently said to itself, man or some other creature may come by and see my casket. I will disguise it, will hang a screen before it. Brake, and sweet fern, and alder leaves are not only loosely sprinkled over it and dangling from it, but often, as it were, pasted close upon and almost incorporated into it.

Dec. 24, 1854. Some three inches of snow fell last night and this morning, concluding with a fine rain, which produced a slight glaze, the first of the winter. This gives the woods a hoary aspect, and increases the stillness by making the leaves immovable even in a considerable wind.

Dec. 24, 1856. . . . Noticed at E. end of the westernmost Andromeda Pond the slender spikes of Lycopus with half-a-dozen little spherical dark brown whorls of pungently fragrant or spicy seeds, somewhat nutmeg-like or even like flagroot (?) when bruised. I am not sure that the seeds of any other mint are thus fragrant now. It scents your handkerchief or pocket-book finely when the crumbled whorls are sprinkled over them. — It was very pleasant walking thus before the storm was over, in the soft, subdued light. We are more domesticated in nature when our vision is confined to near and familiar objects. Did not see a track

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of any animal till returning, near Well-Meadow Field, where many foxes (?), one of whom I had a glimpse of, had been coursing back and forth in the path and near it for three quarters of a mile. They had made quite a path.

I do not take snuff. In my winter walks I stoop and bruise between my thumb and finger the dry whorls of the Lycopus or water horehound, just rising above the snow, stripping them off, and smell that. That is as near as I come to the Spice Islands.

Dec. 24, 1859. . . . I measure the blueberry bush on Flint's Pond Island. The five stems are united at the ground so as to make one round and solid trunk thirty-one inches in circumference, but probably they have grown together there, for they become separate at about six inches above. They may have sprung from different seeds of one berry. At three feet from the ground they measure eleven, eleven, eleven and one half, eight, and six and one half or on an average nine and one half inches. I climbed up and found a comfortable seat, with my feet four feet from the ground. There was room for three or four more there, but unfortunately this was not the season for berries. There were several other clumps of large ones in the neighborhood. One clump close by the former contained twenty-three stems within a

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diameter of three feet, and their average diameter at three feet from the ground was about two inches. These had not been cut because they stood on this small island which has little wood beside, and therefore had grown thus large. . . .

The stems rise up in a winding and zigzag manner, one sometimes resting in the forks of its neighbor. Judging from those whose rings I have counted, the largest of those stems must be about sixty years old.

Dec. 25, 1840. The character of Washington has, after all, been undervalued, because not valued correctly. He was a proper Puritan hero. It is his erectness and persistency which attract me. A few simple deeds with a dignified silence for background, and that is all. He never fluctuated, nor lingered, nor stooped, nor swerved, but was nobly silent and assured. He was not the darling of the people, as no man of integrity can ever be, but was as much respected as loved. His instructions to his steward, his refusal of a crown, his interview with his officers at the termination of the war, his thoughts after his retirement, as expressed in a letter to La Fayette, his remarks to another correspondent on his being chosen president, his last words to Congress, and the unparalleled respect which his most distinguished contemporaries, as Fox and Erskine, expressed for him, are

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refreshing to read in these unheroic days. His behavior in the field and in council and his dignified and contented withdrawal to private life were great. He could advance and he could withdraw.

Dec. 25, 1841. It seems as if Nature did for a long time gently overlook the profanity of man. The wood still kindly echoes the strokes of the axe, and when the strokes are few and seldom, they add a new charm to a walk. All the elements strive to *naturalize* the sound. . . .

It is not a true apology for any coarseness to say that it is natural. The grim woods can afford to be very delicate and perfect in the details.

I don't want to feel as if my life were a sojourn any longer. That philosophy cannot be true which so paints it. It is time now that I begin to live.

Dec. 25, 1851. . . . I go forth to see the sun set. Who knows how it will set even half an hour beforehand? Whether it will go down in clouds or a clear sky? . . . I witness a beauty in the form or coloring of the clouds which addresses itself to my imagination. It is what it suggests and is the symbol of that I care for, and if, by any trick of science, you rob it of this, you do me no service and explain nothing. I, standing twenty miles off, see a crim-

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son cloud in the horizon. You tell me it is a mass of vapor which absorbs all other rays and reflects the red; but that is nothing to the purpose, for this red vision excites me, stirs my blood, makes my thoughts flow. I have new and indescribable fancies, and you have not touched the secret of that influence. If there is not something mystical in your explanation, . . . it is quite insufficient. . . . What sort of science is that which enriches the understanding, but robs the imagination? Not merely robs Peter to pay Paul, but takes from Peter more than it ever gives to Paul. That is simply the way in which it speaks to the understanding, . . . but that is not the way it speaks to the imagination. . . . Just as inadequate to a mere mechanic would be a poet's account of a steam-engine. If we knew all things thus mechanically merely, should we know anything really? — It would be a true discipline for the writer to take the least film of thought that floats in the twilight sky of his mind for his theme, about which he has scarcely one idea (that would be teaching his ideas how to shoot), make a lecture on this, by assiduity and attention get perchance two views of the same, increase a little the stock of knowledge, clear a new field instead of manuring the old. . . . We seek too soon to ally the perceptions of the mind to the experience of the hand, to prove

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our gossamer truths practical, to show their connection with every-day life (better show their distance from every-day life), to relate them to the cider mill and the banking institution. . . . That way of viewing things you know of, least insisted on by you however, least remembered, take that view, adhere to that, insist on that; see all things from that point of view. Will you let these intimations go unattended to, and watch the door bell or knocker? . . . Do not speak for other men; think for yourself. You are shown as in a vision the kingdoms of this world, and of all the worlds, but you prefer to look in upon a puppet show. Though you should speak but to one kindred mind in all time, though you should not speak to one, but only utter aloud, that you may the more completely realize and live in, the idea which contains the reason of your life, that you may build yourself up to the height of your conceptions, that you may remember your creator in the days of your youth, and justify his ways to man, that the end of life may not be its amusement.

Dec. 25, 1853. P. M. Skated to Fair Haven and above. . . . About 4 P. M. the sun sank behind a cloud and the pond began to whoop or boom. I noticed the same yesterday at the same hour on Flint's. It was perfectly silent before. The weather in both cases clear, cold, and windy.

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It is a sort of belching, and as C. said, somewhat frog-like. I suspect it did not continue to whoop long either night. It is a very pleasing phenomenon, so dependent on the attitude of the sun.

When I go to Boston, I go naturally straight through the city down to the end of Long Wharf and look off, for I have no cousins in the back alleys. The water and the vessels are novel and interesting. What are our maritime cities but the shops and dwellings of merchants about a wharf projecting into the sea where there is a convenient harbor, on which to land the produce of other climes, and at which to load the exports of your own. Next in interest to me is the market where the produce of our own country is collected. Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Charleston, New Orleans, and many others are the names of wharves projecting into the sea. They are good places to take in or to discharge a cargo. I see a great many barrels and fig drums, and piles of wood for umbrella sticks, and blocks of granite and ice, etc., and that is Boston. Great piles of goods, and the means of packing and conveying them, much wrapping paper and twine, many crates and hogsheads and trucks, that is Boston. The more barrels, the more Boston. The museums and scientific societies and libraries are accidental. They gather around the barrels to save carting.

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Apparently the ice is held down on the sides of the river by being frozen to the shore and the weeds, and so is overflowed there; but in the middle it is lifted up and makes room for the tide.

I saw just above Fair Haven Pond two or three places where just before the last freezing, when the ice was softened and partly covered with sleet, there had been a narrow canal about eight inches wide quite across the river from meadow to meadow. I am constrained to believe, from the peculiar character of it on the meadow end, where in one case it divided and crossed itself, that it was made either by musk-rats or otters or minks repeatedly crossing there. One end was, for some distance, like an otter trail in the soft upper part of the ice, not worn through.

Dec. 25, 1856. P. M. To Lee's Cliff. A strong wind from the N. W. is gathering the snow into picturesque drifts behind the walls. As usual, they resemble shells more than anything else, sometimes the prows of vessels, also the folds of a white napkin or counterpane dropped over a bonneted head. There are no such picturesque snowdrifts as are formed behind loose and open stone walls. . . .

Take long walks in stormy weather, or through deep snows in the fields and woods, if you would

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keep your spirits up. Deal with brute nature. Be cold and hungry and weary.

Dec. 25, 1858. . . . Now that the sun is setting, all its light seems to glance over the snow-clad pond [Walden], and strike the rocky shore under the pitch pines at the N. E. end. Though the bare, rocky shore there is only a foot or a foot and a half high, as I look, it reflects so much light that the rocks are singularly distinct, as if the pond showed its teeth. . . . How full of soft, pure light the western sky now, after sunset! I love to see the outlines of the pines against it. Unless you watch, you do not know when the sun goes down. It is like a candle extinguished without smoke. A moment ago you saw that glittering orb amid the dry oak leaves in the horizon and now you can detect no trace of it. . . .

But for all voice in that serene hour, I hear an owl hoot. How glad I am to hear him rather than the most eloquent man of the age.

Dec. 25, 1859. How different are men and women, *e. g.*, in respect to the adornment of their heads. Do you ever see an old or jammed bonnet on the head of a woman at a public meeting? But look at any assembly of men with their hats on; how large a proportion of the hats will be old, weather-beaten, and indented; but, I think, so much more picturesque and in-

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teresting. One farmer rides by my door in a hat which it does me good to see, there is so much character in it, so much independence, to begin with, and then affection for his old friends, etc., etc. I should not wonder if there were lichens on it. Think of painting a hero in a brand-new hat! The chief recommendation of the Kossuth hat is that it looks old to start with, and almost as good as new to end with. Indeed, it is generally conceded that a man does not look the worse for a somewhat dilapidated hat. But go to a lyceum and look at the bonnets and various other head gear of the women and girls (who, by the way, keep their hats on, it being too dangerous and expensive to take them off), why, every one looks as fragile as a butterfly's wings, having just come out of a bandbox, as it will go into a bandbox again when the lyceum is over. Men wear their hats for use, women theirs for ornament. I have seen the greatest philosopher in the town with what the traders would call a "shocking bad hat" on, but the woman whose bonnet does not come up to the mark is at best a blue-stocking. The man is not particularly proud of his beaver and musquash, but the woman flaunts her ostrich and sable in your face. Ladies are in haste to dress as if it were cold or as if it were warm, though it may not yet be so, merely to display a new dress.

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Dec. 26, 1840. . . . When the pond is frozen I do not suspect the wealth under my feet. How many pickerel are poised on easy fin fathoms below the loaded wain. The revolution of the seasons must be a curious phenomenon to them. Now the sun and wind brush aside their curtain, and they see the heavens again.

Sunday, Dec. 26, 1841. . . . When I hear this bell ring, I am carried back to years and Sabbaths when I was newer and more innocent, I fear, than now, and it seems to me as if there were a world within a world. Sin, I am sure, is not in overt acts, or indeed in acts of any kind, but is in proportion to the time which has come behind us, and displaced eternity, to the degree in which our elements are mixed with the elements of the world. The whole duty of life is implied in the question, how to respire and aspire both at once.

Dec. 26, 1850. The pine woods seen from the hill-tops, now that the ground is covered with snow, are not green, but a dark brown, greenish brown, perhaps. You see dark patches of wood.

Dec. 26, 1851. I observed this afternoon that when E—— H—— came home from sledding wood and unyoked his oxen, they made a business of stretching and scratching themselves with their horns, rubbing themselves against the posts, and licking themselves in those parts

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which the yoke had prevented their reaching all day. The human way in which they behaved affected me even pathetically. They were too serious to be glad that their day's work was done; they had not spirits enough left for that. They behaved as a tired wood-chopper might. This was to me a new phase in the life of the laboring ox. It is painful to think how they may sometimes be overworked.

Dec. 26, 1853. This forenoon it snowed pretty hard for some hours, the first snow of any consequence thus far. It is about three inches deep. I go out at 2½ P. M. just as it ceases. Now is the time before the wind rises, or the sun has shone, to go forth and see the snow on the trees. The clouds have lifted somewhat, but are still spitting snow a little. The vapor of the steam-engine does not rise high in the misty air. . . . The snow has fallen so gently that it forms an upright wall on the slenderest twig. The agreeable maze which the branches make is more obvious than ever, and every twig thus laden is as still as the hillside itself. The pitch pines are covered with soft globular masses. The effect of the snow is to press down the forest, confound it with the grasses, and create a new surface to the earth above, shutting us in with it, and we go along somewhat like moles through our galleries. The sight of the pure and track-

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less road up Brister's Hill, with branches and trees supporting snowy burdens bending over it on each side, would tempt us to begin life again. The ice is covered up and skating gone. The bare hills are so white that I cannot see their outlines against the misty sky. The snow lies handsomely on the shrub-oaks, like a coarse braiding in the air. They have so many small and zigzag twigs that it comes near to filling up with a light snow to that depth. The hunters are already out with dogs to follow the first beast that makes a track. — Saw a small flock of tree sparrows in the sproutlands under Bartlett's Cliff. Their metallic chip is much like the lisp of the chickadee. — All weeds with their seeds rising dark above the snow are now remarkably conspicuous, which before were not observed against the dark earth. — I passed by the pitch pine that was struck by lightning, and was impressed with awe on looking up and seeing that broad, distinct, spiral mark, more distinct even than when made eight years ago, as one might groove a walking stick, . . . mark where a terrific and resistless bolt came down from heaven, out of the harmless sky, eight years ago. It seemed a sacred spot. I felt that we had not learned much since the days of Tullus Hostilius. The tree at length shows the effect of the shock, and the woodpeckers have begun to bore it on one side.

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Walden still open. Saw in it a small diver, probably a grebe or dobchick, dipper or what not, with the markings, so far as I saw, of the crested grebe, but smaller. It had a black head, a white ring about its neck, a white breast, black back, and apparently no tail. It dived and swam a few rods under water, and when on the surface kept turning round and round warily, nodding its head the while. This is the only pond hereabouts that is open.

Was overtaken by an Irishman seeking work. I asked him if he could chop wood. He said he was not long in this country, that he could cut one side of a tree well enough, but he had not learned to change hands and cut the other, without going round it, what we call crossing the calf. They get very small wages at this season of the year, almost give up the ghost in the effort to keep soul and body together. He left me on the run to find a new master.

Dec. 26, 1854. At R——'s [New Bedford]. I do not remember to have ever seen such a day as this in Concord. There is no snow here (though there has been excellent sleighing at Concord since the 5th), but it is very muddy, the frost coming out of the ground as in spring with us.

I went to walk in the woods with R. It was wonderfully warm and pleasant. The cockerels

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crowed just as in a spring day at home. I felt the winter breaking up in me, and if I had been at home, I should have tried to write poetry. They told me that this was not a rare day there, that they had little or no winter such as we have, and it was owing to the influence of the Gulf Stream which was only sixty miles from Nantucket at the nearest, or one hundred and twenty miles from them. In mid-winter when the wind was S. E. or even S. W., they frequently had days as warm and debilitating as in summer. There is a difference of about a degree in latitude between Concord and New Bedford, but far more in climate. The American holly is quite common there, with its red berries still holding on, and is now their Christmas evergreen. I heard the larks sing strong and sweet, and saw robins. . . . R. said that pheasants from England (where they are not indigenous) had been imported into Naushon and are now killed there.

Dec. 26, 1855. After snow, rain, and hail yesterday and last night, we have this morning quite a glaze, there being at least an inch or two of crusted snow on the ground; the most we have had. The sun comes out at 9 A. M. and lights up the ice-incrusted trees. . . . I go to Walden *via* the almshouse and up the railroad. Trees seen in the west against the dark cloud, the sun shining on them, are perfectly white as

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frost work, and their outlines very perfectly and distinctly revealed, great wisps that they are and ghosts of trees, with recurved twigs. The walls and fences are incased, and the fields bristle with a myriad of crystal spears. Already the wind is rising and a brattling is heard overhead in the street. The sun shining down a gorge over the woods at Brister's Hill reveals a wonderfully brilliant, as well as seemingly solid and diversified region in the air. The ice is from an eighth to a quarter of an inch thick about the twigs and pine needles, only one half as thick commonly on one side. The heads of the trees are bowed, and their plumes and needles stiff as if preserved under glass for the inspection of posterity. . . . The pines thus weighed down are sharp-pointed at top, and remind me of firs and even hemlocks, their drooping boughs being wrapped about them like the folds of a cloak or a shawl. The crust is already strewn with bits of the green needles which have been broken off. Frequently the whole top stands up bare, while the middle and lower branches are drooping and massed together, resting on one another. — But the low and spreading weeds in the fields and the woodpaths are the most interesting. Here are asters (savory-leaved), whose flat, imbricated calyxes, three quarters of an inch over, are surmounted and inclosed in a perfectly transparent

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ice button, like a glass knob, through which you see the reflections of the brown calyx. These are very common. — Each little blue curl calyx has a spherical button, like those over a little boy's jacket, little sprigs of them, and the pennyroyal has still smaller spheres more regularly arranged about its stem, chandelier-wise, and still smells through the ice. The finest grasses support the most wonderful burdens of ice and most bunched on their minute threads. These weeds are spread and arched over into the snow again, countless little arches a few inches high, each cased in ice, which you break with a tinkling crash at each step. — The scarlet fruit of the cockspur lichen, seen glowing through the more opaque whitish or snowy crust of a stump, is, on close inspection, the richest sight of all, for the scarlet is increased and multiplied by reflection through the bubbles and hemispherical surfaces of the crust, as if it covered some vermilion grain thickly strewn. The brown cup lichens stand in their midst. The whole rough bark, too, is incased.

Already a squirrel has perforated the crust above the mouth of his burrow here and there, by the side of the path, and left some empty acorn shells on the snow. He has shoveled out this morning before the snow has frozen on his doorstep. . . .

Particularly are we attracted in the winter by

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greenness and signs of growth, as the green and white shoots of grass and weeds pulled, or floating on the water, and also by color, as the cockspur lichens, crimson birds, etc.

4 P. M. Up railroad. Since the sun has risen higher and fairly triumphed over the clouds, the ice has glistened with all the prismatic hues. . . . The whole top of the pine forest, as seen miles off in the horizon, is of sharp points, the leading shoots with a few plumes.

In a true history or biography, of how little consequence those events of which so much is commonly made. . . . I find in my journal that the most important events in my life, if recorded at all, are not dated.

Dec. 26, 1858. P. M. To Jenny Dugan's. . . . Call at a farmer's this Sunday P. M., where I surprise the well-to-do masters of the house, lounging in very ragged clothes, for which they think it necessary to apologize, and one of them is busy laying the supper table (at which he invites me to sit down at last), bringing up cold meat from the cellar and a lump of butter on the end of his knife, and making the tea by the time his mother gets home from church. Thus sincere and homely, as I am glad to know, is the actual life of these New England men, wearing rags indoors there which would disgrace a beggar (and are not beggars and paupers they who

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could *be* disgraced so), and doing the indispensable work, however humble. How much better and more humane it was than if they had imported and set up among their penates a headless torso from the ruins of Ireland! I am glad to find that our New England life has a genuine, humane core to it; that inside, after all, there is so little pretense and brag. . . . The middle-aged son sits there in the old unpainted house in a ragged coat, and helps his old mother about her work when the field does not require him.

Dec. 26, 1859. P. M. Skate to Lee's Bridge. . . . I see a brute with a gun in his hand standing motionless over a muskrat's house which he has destroyed. I find that he has visited every one in the neighborhood of Fair Haven Pond, above and below, and broken them all down, laying open the interior to the water, and then stood watchful close by for the poor creature to show its head for a breath of air. There lies the red carcass of one whose pelt he has taken on the spot, . . . and for his afternoon's cruelty that fellow will be rewarded with ninepence, perchance. When I consider the opportunities of the civilized man for getting ninepences and getting light, this seems to me more savage than savages are. Depend on it that whoever thus treats the muskrat's house, his refuge when the water is frozen thick, he and his family will not come to

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a good end. So many of these houses being broken open, twenty or thirty I see, I look into the open hole, and find in it, in almost every instance, many pieces of the white root, with the little leaf bud curled up, which I take to be the yellow lily root. The leaf bud unrolled has the same scent as the yellow lily. There will be a half dozen of these pointed buds, more or less green, coming to a point at the end of the root. Also I see a little coarser, what I take to be the green leaf stalk of the *pontederia*, for I see a little of the stipule sheathing the stalk from within it (?) . . . In one hole there was a large quantity of the root I have mentioned, its leaf buds attached or bitten off. The root was generally five or six eighths of an inch in diameter. It must, I think, be the principal food of the muskrat at this time. If you open twenty cabins you will find it in at least three quarters of them, and nothing else unless a very little *pontederia* leaf stem (?). By eating, or killing at least, so many lily buds, they must thin out the plant considerably. — I saw no fresh clam shells in the holes and scarcely any on the ice anywhere on the edge of open places, nor are they probably deposited in a heap under the ice. It may be, however, that the shells are opened in the hole, and then dropped in the water near by.

Twice this winter I have noticed a muskrat

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floating in a placid, smooth, open place in the river, when it was frozen for a mile each side, looking at first like a bit of stump or frozen meadow, but showing its whole upper outline from nose to end of tail, perfectly still till he observed me, then suddenly diving and steering under the ice toward some cabin's entrance or other retreat half-a-dozen or more rods off.

As some of the tales of our childhood, the inventions of some Mother Goose, will haunt us when we are grown up, so the race itself still believes in some of the fables with which its infancy has amused and imposed on it, *e. g.*, the fable of the Cranes and Pygmies which learned men endeavored to believe or explain in the last century.

Aristotle being almost, if not quite, the first to write systematically on animals, gives them of course only popular names, such as were common with the hunters, fowlers, fishers, and farmers of his day. He used no scientific terms. But he having the priority, and having, as it were, created science, and given it its laws, those popular Greek names, even when the animal to which they were applied cannot be identified, have been in great part preserved, and make the learned, far-fetched, and commonly unintelligible names of genera to-day, *e. g.*, ὁλοθούριον, etc. His "History of Animals" has thus become a very storehouse of scientific nomenclature.

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Dec. 26, 1860. M—— sent to me yesterday a perfect *Strix asio*, or red owl of Wilson, not at all gray. This is now generally made the same with the *nœvia*, but while some consider the red the old, others consider it the young. This is, as Wilson says, a bright "nut-brown." . . . It is twenty-three inches alar extent by about eleven long. Feet extend one inch beyond tail. Cabot makes the old bird red, Audubon, the young.

To such an excess have our civilization and division of labor come that A., a professional huckleberry picker, has hired B.'s field, and we will suppose is now gathering the crop, perhaps with the aid of a patented machine. C., a professed cook, is superintending the cooking of a pudding made of some of the berries, while Professor D., for whom the pudding is intended, sits in his library writing a book, a work on the Vaccinieæ, of course. And now the result of this downward course will be seen in that book, which should be the ultimate fruit of the huckleberry field, and account for the existence of the two professors who come between D. and A. It will be worthless. There will be none of the spirit of the huckleberry in it. The reading of it will be a weariness to the flesh. To use a homely illustration, it is to save at the spile, and waste at the bung. I believe in a different kind

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of division of labor, and that Professor D. should divide himself between the library and the huckleberry field.

Dec. 27, 1837. . . . The real heroes of minstrelsy have been ideal, even when the names of actual heroes have been perpetuated. The real Arthur, who "not only excelled the experienced past, but also the possible future," of whom it was affirmed, after many centuries, that he was not dead, but "had withdrawn from the world into some magical region from which at a future crisis he was to reappear, and lead the Cymri in triumph through the island," whose character and actions were the theme of the bards of Bretagne, and the foundation of their interminable romances, was only an ideal impersonation. — Men claim for the ideal an actual existence also, but do not often expand the actual into the ideal. "If you do not believe me, go into Bretagne, and mention in the streets and villages that Arthur is really dead like other men. You will not escape with impunity. You will be either hooted with the curses of your hearers, or stoned to death."

The most remarkable instance of home-sickness is that of the colony of Franks transplanted by the Romans from the German Ocean to the Euxine, who, at length resolving to a man to abandon the country, seized the vessels which

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carried them out, and reached at last their native shores, after innumerable difficulties and dangers upon the Mediterranean and the Atlantic.

Dec. 27, 1851. Sunset from Fair Haven Hill. This evening there are many clouds in the west into which the sun goes down, so that we have our visible or apparent sunset and red evening sky as much as fifteen minutes before the real sunset. You must be early on the hills to witness such a sunset, — by half-past four at least. Then all the vales, even to the horizon, are full of a purple vapor which half veils the distant mountains, and the windows of undiscoverable farm-houses shine like an early candle or a fire. After the sun has gone behind a cloud, there appears to be a gathering of clouds around his setting, and for a few moments his light in the amber sky seems more intense, brighter, and purer than at noonday, . . . like the ecstasy which we are told sometimes lights up the face of a dying man. That is a serene or evening death, like the end of the day. Then at last through all the grossness which has accumulated in the atmosphere of day is seen a patch of serene sky, fairer by contrast with the surrounding dark than midday, and even the gross atmosphere of the day is gilded and made pure as amber by the setting sun, as if the day's sins were forgiven it.

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The man is blessed who every day is permitted to behold anything so pure and serene as the western sky at sunset, while revolutions vex the world.

There is no winter necessarily in the sky, though snow covers the earth. The sky is always ready to answer our moods. We can see summer there or winter.

Dec. 27, 1852. Not a particle of ice in Walden to-day. Paddled across it, and took my new boat out. A black and white duck on it. Flint's and Fair Haven frozen up. Ground bare. River open.

Dec. 27, 1853. High wind with more snow in the night. . . . Snowy ridges cross the village street, and make it look as wild and bleak as a pass of the Rocky Mountains, or the Sierra Nevada.

P. M. To Fair Haven Pond, up meadows and river. The snow blows like spray fifteen feet high across the fields, while the wind roars in the trees as in the rigging of a vessel. It is altogether like the ocean in a storm. . . .

It is surprising what things the snow betrays. I had not seen a meadow-mouse all summer, but no sooner does the snow come and spread its mantle over the earth than it is printed with the tracks of countless mice and larger animals. I see where the mouse has dived into a little

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hole in the snow not larger than my thumb by the side of a weed, and a yard farther reappeared, and so on alternately above and beneath. A snug life it lives. — The crows come nearer to the houses, alight on trees by the roadside, apparently being put to it for food. . . .

It is a true winter sunset, almost cloudless, clear, cold, indigo-like, along the horizon. The evening (?) star is seen shining brightly before the twilight has begun. A rosy tint suffuses the eastern horizon. The outline of the mountains is wonderfully distinct and hard. They are a dark blue and very near. Wachusett looks like a right-whale over our bow, plowing the continent, with his flukes well down. He has a vicious look, as if he had a harpoon in him.

I wish I could buy at the shops some kind of India rubber that would rub out at once all that in my writing which it costs me so many perusals, so many months, if not years, and so much reluctance, to erase.

Dec. 27, 1857. . . . Walden is almost entirely skimmed over. It will probably be completely frozen over to-night.

I frequently hear a dog bark at some distance in the night, which, strange as it may seem, reminds me of the cooing or crowing of a ring-dove which I heard every night a year ago at Perth Amboy. It was sure to coo on the slightest

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noise in the house, as good as a watch-dog. The crowing of cocks too reminds me of it, and now I think of it, it had precisely the intonation and accent of the cat-owl's hoó hoo-hoo-o-o, in each case, a sonorous dwelling on the last syllable.

They get the pitch and break ground with the first note, and then prolong and swell it in the last.

The commonest and cheapest sounds, as the barking of a dog, produce the same effect on fresh and healthy ears that the rarest music does. It depends on your appetite for sound. Just as a crust is sweeter to a healthy appetite than confectionery to a pampered or diseased one. It is better that these cheap sounds be music to us than that we have the rarest ears for music in any other sense. I have lain awake at night many a time to think of the barking of a dog which I had heard long before, bathing my being again in those waves of sound, as a frequenter of the opera might lie awake remembering the music he had heard.

As my mother made my pockets once of father's old fire bags, with the date of the formation of the society on them, 1794 (though they made but rotten pockets), so we put our meaning into those old mythologies. I am sure that the Greeks were commonly innocent of any such *double entendre* as we attribute to them.

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One while we do not wonder that so many commit suicide, life is so barren and worthless. We only live on by an effort of the will. Suddenly our condition is ameliorated, and even the barking of a dog is a pleasure to us. So closely is our happiness bound up with our physica condition, and one reacts on the other.

Do not despair of life. You have no doubt force enough to overcome your obstacles. Think of the fox prowling through wood and field in a winter night for something to satisfy his hunger. Notwithstanding cold and the hounds and traps, his race survives. I do not believe any of them ever committed suicide. I saw this afternoon where probably a fox had rolled some small carcass in the snow.

I am disappointed by most essays and lectures. I find that I had expected the authors would have some life, some very private experience to report, which would make it comparatively unimportant in what style they expressed themselves, but commonly they have only a talent to exhibit. The new magazine which all had been expecting, may contain only another love story, as naturally told as the last, perchance, but without the slightest novelty in it. It may be a mere vehicle for Yankee phrases.

What interesting contrasts our climate affords. In July you rush panting into the pond to cool

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yourself in the tepid water, when the stones on the bank are so heated that you cannot hold one tightly in your hand, and horses are melting on the road. — Now you walk on the same pond frozen, amid the snow, with numbed fingers and feet, and see the water target bleached and stiff in the ice.

Dec. 27, 1858. Talk of Fate! How little one can know what is *fated* to another! What he can do and what he cannot do. I doubt whether one can give or receive any very pertinent advice. In all important crises, one can only consult his genius. Though he were the most shiftless and craziest of mortals, if he still recognizes that he has any genius to consult, none may presume to go between him and her. They, methinks, are poor stuff and creatures of a miserable fate who can be advised and persuaded in very important steps. Show me a man who consults his genius, and you have shown me a man who cannot be advised. You may know what a thing costs or is worth to you, you can never know what it costs or is worth to me. All the community may scream because one man is born who will not conform, because conformity to him is death. He is so constituted. They know nothing about his case, they are fools when they presume to advise him. The man of genius knows what he is aiming at.

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Nobody else knows, and he alone knows when something comes between him and his object. In the course of generations, however, men will excuse you for not doing as they do, if you will bring enough to pass in your own way.

Dec. 28, 1840. The snow hangs on the trees as the fruit of the season. In those twigs which the wind has preserved naked there is a warmer green for the contrast. The whole tree exhibits a kind of interior and household comfort, a sheltered and covert aspect. It has the snug inviting look of a cottage on the moors, buried in snow. — Our voices ring hollowly through the woods as through a chamber, the twigs crackle under foot with private and household echoes. I have observed on a clear winter's morning that the woods have their southern window as well as the house, through which the first beams of the sun stream along their aisles and corridors. The sun goes up swiftly behind the limbs of the white pine, as the sashes of a window.

Dec. 28, 1852. . . . Both for bodily and mental health court the present. Embrace health wherever you find her. . . .

It is worth while to apply what wisdom one has to the conduct of his life, surely. I find myself oftenest wise in little things and foolish in great ones. That I may accomplish some petty,

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particular affair well, I live my whole life coarsely. A broad margin of leisure is as beautiful in a man's life as in a book. Haste makes waste no less in life than in housekeeping. Keep the time, observe the hours of the universe, not of the cars. What are threescore years and ten hurriedly and coarsely lived to moments of divine leisure, in which your life is coincident with the life of the universe. We live too fast and coarsely, just as we eat too fast, and do not know the true savor of our food. We consult our will and our understanding and the expectation of men, not our genius. I can impose upon myself tasks which will crush me for life and prevent all expansion, and this I am but too inclined to do. One moment of life costs many hours, hours not of business, but of preparation and invitation. Yet the man who does not betake himself at once and desperately to sawing is called a loafer, though he may be knocking at the doors of heaven all the while, which shall surely be opened to him. That aim in life is highest which requires the highest and finest discipline. How much, what infinite leisure it requires, as of a life-time, to appreciate a single phenomenon! You must camp down beside it as for life, having reached your land of promise, and give yourself wholly to it. It must stand for the whole world to you, symbolical of all

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things. The least partialness is your own defect of sight, and cheapens the experience fatally. Unless the humming of a gnat is as the music of the spheres, and the music of the spheres is as the humming of a gnat, they are naught to me. It is not communications to serve for a history (which are science), but the great story itself, that cheers and satisfies us.

Dec. 28, 1853. . . . I hear and see tree sparrows about the weeds in the garden. They seem to visit the gardens with the earliest snow, or is it that they are more obvious against the white ground. By their sharp, silvery chip, perchance, they inform each other of their whereabouts and keep together.

Dec. 28, 1854. [Nantucket.] A misty rain as yesterday. Captain Gardiner carried me to Siasconset in his carriage. . . . He is extensively engaged in raising pines on the island. There is not a tree to be seen except such as are set out about houses. . . . He showed me several lots of his of different sizes, one tract of three hundred acres sown in rows with a planter, where the young trees, two years old, were just beginning to green the ground, and I saw one of Norway pine and our pitch, mixed, eight years old, which looked quite like a forest at a distance. The Norway pines had grown the faster, with a longer shoot, and had a bluer look

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at a distance, more like the white pine The common pitch pines have a reddish crisped look at top. Some are sown in rows, some broadcast. At first Captain Gardiner was alarmed to find that the ground moles had gone along in the furrows directly under the plants and so injured the roots as to kill many of the trees, and he sowed over again. He was also discouraged to find that a sort of spindle worm had killed the leading shoot of a great part of his neighbor's older trees. These plantations must very soon change the aspect of the island. His common pitch pine seed obtained from the Cape cost him about twenty dollars a bushel; at least about a dollar a quart with the wings; and they told him it took about eighty bushels of cones to make one such bushel of seeds. I was surprised to find that the Norway pine seed without the wings imported from France had cost not quite two dollars a bushel delivered at New York or Philadelphia. He has ordered eight hogsheads of the best, clear wingless seeds, at this rate. I *think* he said it took about a gallon to sow an acre. He had tried to get white pine seed, but in vain. The cones had not contained any of late. (?) This looks as if he meant to sow a good part of the island, though he said he might sell some of the seed. It is an interesting enterprise. . . . This island must look exactly like a prairie,

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except that the view in clear weather is bounded by the sea. — Saw crows and robins, also saw and heard larks frequently, but most abundant running along the ruts or circling about just over the ground in small flocks, what the inhabitants call snow-birds, a gray, bunting-like bird about the size of the snow-bunting. Can it be the sea-side finch, or the savannah sparrow, or the shore lark? . . . A few years ago some one imported a dozen partridges from the main-land, but though some were seen for a year or two, not one had been seen for some time, and they were thought to be extinct. Captain Gardiner thought the raccoons, which had been very numerous, might have caught them. In Harrison days some coons were imported and turned loose. They multiplied very fast, and became quite a pest, killing hens, etc., and were killed in turn. Finally, people turned out and hunted them with hounds, and killed seventy-five at one time, since which he had not heard of any. There were foxes once, but none now, and no indigeous animal bigger than a ground mole. . . .

The last Indian, not of pure blood, died this very month, and I saw his picture with a basket of huckleberries in his hand.

Dec. 28, 1856. I am surprised to see the *Fringilla hyemalis* here. [Walden.] . . . The fishermen sit by their damp fire of rotten pine

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wood, so wet and chilly that even smoke in their eyes is a kind of comfort. There they sit, ever and anon scanning their reels to see if any have fallen, and if not catching many fish, still getting what they went for, though they may not be aware of it, *i. e.*, a wilder experience than the town affords. . . .

I thrive best on solitude. If I have had a companion only one day in a week, unless it were one or two I could name, I find that the value of the week to me has been seriously affected. It dissipates my days, and often it takes me another week to get over it. As the Esquimaux of Smith's Strait in North Greenland laughed when Kane warned them of their utter extermination, cut off as they were by ice on all sides from the race, unless they attempted in season to cross the glacier southward, so do I laugh when you tell me of the danger of impoverishing myself by isolation. It is here that the walrus and the seal, and the white bear, and the eider ducks and auks on which I batten, most abound.

Dec. 28, 1858. P. M. To Walden. The earth is bare. I walk about the pond looking at the shores, since I have not paddled about it much of late years. What a grand place for a promenade! . . . That rocky shore under the pitch pines, which so reflects the light, is only

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three feet wide by one foot high, yet there even to-day the ice is melted close to the edge, and just off this shore the pickerel are most abundant. This is the warm and sunny side to which any one, man, bird, or quadruped, would soonest resort in cool weather. I noticed a few chickadees there in the edge of the pines in the sun, lisping and twittering cheerfully to one another with a reference to me, I think, the cunning and innocent little birds. One a little farther off utters the phœbe note. There is a foot, more or less, of clear, open water at the edge here, and seeing this, one of these birds hops down, as if glad to find any open water at this season, and after prinking, it stands in the water on a stone, up to its belly, and dips its head, and flirts the water about vigorously, giving itself a good washing. I had not expected this at this season. No fear that it will catch cold. — The ice cracks suddenly with a shivering jar, like crockery or the brittlest material, such as it is, and I notice, as I sit here at this open edge, that each time the ice cracks, though it may be a good distance off toward the middle, the water here is very much agitated. The ice is about six inches thick.

Dec. 29, 1840. As echo makes me enunciate distinctly, so the sympathy of a friend gives plainness and point to my speech. This is the advantage of letter-writing.

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Dec. 29, 1841. . . . Whole weeks or months of my summer life slide away in thin volumes like mist or smoke, till at length some warm morning, perchance, I see a sheet of mist blown down the brook to the swamp, its shadow flitting across the fields which have caught a new significance from that accident, and as that vapor is raised above the earth, so shall the next weeks be elevated above the plane of the actual; or a like experience may come when the setting sun slants across the pastures, and the cows low to my inward ear, and only enhance the stillness, and the eve is as the dawn, a beginning hour and not a final one, as if it would never have done, with its clear, western amber, inciting men to lives of limpid purity. At evening, other parts of my work shine than I had thought at noon, and I discover the real purport of my toil as when the husbandman has reached the end of the furrow and looks back, he can best tell where the pressed earth shines most. . . .

A man should go out of Nature with the chirp of the cricket or the trill of the veery singing in his ear. These earthly sounds should only die away for a season, as the strains of the harp rise and fall. Death is that expressive pause in the music of the blast. I would be as clean as ye, O Woods. I shall not rest till I am as innocent as you. I know that I shall sooner or later

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attain to an unspotted innocence, for when I consider that state even now I am thrilled.

If we were wise enough, we should see to what virtue we were indebted for any happier moment we might have, nor doubt we had earned this at some time.

These motions everywhere in Nature must surely be the circulations of God; . . . the running stream, the waving tree, the roving wind, whence else their infinite health and freedom. I can see nothing so holy as unrelaxed play and frolic in this bower God has built for us. The suspicion of sin never comes to this experience. If men felt this they would never build temples even of marble or diamond (it would be sacrilege and profane), but disport them forever in this paradise. . . .

It seems as if only one trait, one little incident in human biography need to be said or written in some era, that all readers may go mad after it, and the man who did the miracle is made a demigod henceforth. — What we all do, not one can tell, and when some lucky speaker utters a truth of our experience and not of our speculation, we think he must have had the nine Muses and the three Graces to help him.

Dec. 29, 1851. The sun just risen. The ground is almost entirely bare. . . . It is warm as

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an April morning. There is a sound of blue-birds in the air, and the cocks crow as in the spring. The steam curls up from the roofs and the ground. You walk with open cloak. It is exciting to behold the smooth, glassy surface of water where the melted snow has formed large puddles and ponds, and to see it running in the sluices. . . . In the afternoon to Saw mill brook with W. E. C. . . . It feels as warm as in summer. You sit on any fence rail and vegetate in the sun, and realize that the earth may produce peas again. Yet they say that this open and mild weather is unhealthy. That is always the way with them. How admirable it is that we can never foresee the weather, that it is always novel. Yesterday nobody dreamed of to-day. Nobody dreams of to-morrow. Hence the weather is ever the news. . . . This day yesterday was as incredible as any other miracle. Now all creatures feel it, even the cattle chewing stalks in the barn-yards, and perchance it has even penetrated to the lurking places of the crickets under the rocks.

Dec. 29, 1853. . . . A driving snow-storm all day, imprisoning most, stopping the cars, blocking up the roads. . . . The snow penetrates through the smallest crevices about doors and windows. . . . It is the worst snow-storm to bear that I remember. A strong wind from

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the north blows the snow almost horizontally, and beside freezing you, almost takes your breath away. The driving snow blinds you, and when you are protected, you can see but a little way, it is so thick. Yet in spite of or on account of it all, I see the first flock of arctic snow-birds, *Emberiza nivalis*, near the depot, white and black, with a sharp whistle-like note.

What a contrast between the village street now and as it was last summer; the leafy elms then resounding with the warbling vireo, robins, bluebirds, the fiery hangbird, etc., to which the villagers, kept in doors by the heat, listened through open lattices. Now it is like a street in Nova Zembla, if they were to have any there. I wade to the post office as solitary a traveler as ordinarily in a wood-path in winter. The snow is mid-leg deep, while drifts as high as one's head are heaped against the houses and fences, and here and there range across the street like snowy mountains. . . . There is not a track leading from any door to indicate that the inhabitants have been forth to-day, any more than there is the track of any quadruped by the wood-paths. It is all pure, untrodden snow, banked up against the houses now at 4 P. M. . . . In one place the drift covers the front yard fence, and stretches thence upward to the top of the front door, shutting all in. . . . Frequently the

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snow lies banked up three or four feet high against the front doors, . . . there is a drift over each window, and the clapboards are all hoary with it. It is as if the inhabitants were all frozen to death, and now you threaded the desolate streets, weeks after that calamity. There is not a sleigh or vehicle of any kind on the Milldam; but one saddled horse on which a farmer has come into town. . . . Yet they are warmer, merrier than ever there within. At the post office they ask each traveler news of the cars, is there any train up or down, how deep the snow is on a level.

Of the snow bunting, Wilson says that they appear in the northern parts of the United States "early in December, or with the first heavy snow, particularly if drifted by high winds." This day answers to that description exactly. The wind is northerly. He adds that, "they are universally considered as the harbingers of severe cold weather." They come down from the extreme north, and are common to the two continents. He quotes Pennant as saying that they "inhabit not only Greenland, but even the dreadful climate of Spitzbergen where vegetation is nearly extinct, and scarcely any but cryptogamous plants are found. It therefore excites wonder how birds which are graminivorous in every other than those frost-bound regions

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subsist; yet are there found in great flocks, both on the land and ice of Spitzbergen." Pennant also says that they inhabit in summer "the most naked Lapland Alps," and "descend in rigorous seasons into Sweden, and fill the roads and fields," on which account the uplanders call them "*hardwarsfogel*," hard weather-birds; he also says, "they overflow [in winter] the more southern countries in amazing multitudes." Wilson says their colors are very variable, "and the whiteness of their plumage is observed to be greatest toward the depth of winter." He also says truly that they seldom sit long, "being a roving, restless bird." Peabody says that in summer they are "pure white and black," but are not seen of that color here. Those I saw to-day were of that color. . . . He says they are white and rusty brown here. These are the true winter birds for you, these winged snowballs. I could hardly see them, the air was so full of driving snow. What hardy creatures! Where do they spend the night? . . .

The farmer considers how much pork he has in his barrel, how much meal in his bin, how much wood in his shed. Each family, perchance, sends forth one representative before night, who makes his way with difficulty to the grocery or the post office to learn the news, *i. e.*, to hear what others say to it, who can give the best ac-

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count of it, best can name it, has waded farthest in it, has been farthest out, and can tell the biggest and most adequate story, and hastens back with the news. . . .

The thoughts and associations of summer and autumn are now as completely departed from our minds as the leaves are blown from the trees. Some withered deciduous ones are left to rustle, and our cold immortal evergreens. Some lichenous thoughts still adhere to us.

Dec. 29, 1855. Down railroad to Andromeda Ponds. . . . I see a shrike flying low beneath the level of the railroad, which rises and alights on the topmost twig of an elm within four or five rods. All ash or bluish slate above, down to mid-wings, dirty white breast, and a broad black mark through eyes on side of head; primaries (?) black, and some white appears when it flies. Most distinctive its small hooked bill (upper mandible). It makes no sound, but flits to the top of an oak farther off. Probably a male.

Dec. 29, 1856. P. M. To Warren Miles's Mill. We must go out and re-ally ourselves to Nature every day. We must make root, send out some little fibre at least, even every winter day. I am sensible that I am imbibing health when I open my mouth to the wind. Staying in the house breeds a sort of insanity always. Every

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house is, in this sense, a hospital. A night and a forenoon is as much confinement to those wards as I can stand. I am aware that I recover some sanity, which I had lost, almost the instant that I come abroad.

Dec. 29, 1858. P. M. Skate to Israel Rice's. I think more of skates than of the horse or locomotive as annihilators of distance, for while I am getting along with the speed of the horse, I have at the same time the satisfactions of the horse and his rider, and far more adventure and variety than if I were riding. We never cease to be surprised when we see how swiftly the skater glides along. Just compare him with one walking or running. The walker is but a snail in comparison, and the runner gives up the contest after a few rods. The skater can afford to follow all the windings of a stream, and yet soon leaves far behind and out of sight the walker who cuts across. Distance is hardly an obstacle to him. . . . The skater has wings, talaria to his feet. Moreover, you have such perfect control of your feet that you can take advantage of the narrowest and most winding and sloping bridge of ice in order to pass between the button bushes and the open stream, or under a bridge on a narrow shelf where the walker cannot go at all. You can glide securely within an inch of destruction on this, the most slippery of

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surfaces, more securely than you could walk there perhaps on any other material. You can pursue swiftly the most intricate and winding path, even leaping obstacles that suddenly present themselves. . . .

H—— H—— was fishing a quarter of a mile this side of Hubbard's Bridge. He had caught a pickerel . . . twenty-six inches long, . . . a very handsome fish. Dark brown above, yellow and brown on the side, becoming at length almost a clear golden yellow low down, with a white abdomen and reddish fins. They are handsome fellows, both the pikes in the water and the tigers in the jungle. What tragedies are enacted under this dumb, icy platform in the fields! What an anxious and adventurous life the small fishes must live, liable at any moment to be swallowed by the larger! No fish of moderate size can go stealing along safely in any part of the stream, but suddenly there may come rushing out from this jungle or that some greedy monster and gulp him down. Parent fishes, if they care for their offspring, how can they trust them abroad out of their sight!

It takes so many fishes a week to fill the maw of this large one. And the large ones! H—— H—— and company are lying in wait for them.

Dec. 29, 1859. Very cold morning. About

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15°— at 8 A. M. at our door. I went to the river immediately after sunrise; could see a little greenness in the ice, and also a little rose color from the snow, but far less than before sunset. Do both these phenomena then require a gross atmosphere? Apparently the ice is greenest when the sun is twenty or thirty minutes above the horizon.

From [a] smooth open place . . . a great deal of vapor was rising, to the height of a dozen feet or more, as from a boiling kettle. This, then, is a phenomenon of quite cold weather. I did not notice it yesterday P. M. These open places are a sort of breathing holes of the river. . . . Just as cold weather reveals the breath of a man, still greater cold reveals the breath of, *i. e.*, warm, moist air over, the river. . . . P. M. . . . When I went to walk it was about 10° above zero, and when I returned 1°+. I did not notice any vapor rising from the open places as I did in the morning when it was 16°— and also when it was 6°—. . . . When the air is, say 4° or 5° below zero, the water being 32°+, then there is a visible evaporation. Is there the same difference, or some 40° between the heat of the human breath and that of the air in which the moisture in the breath becomes visible in vapor. This has to do with the dew point. — Next, what makes the water of those open places thus warm? and is it

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any warmer than elsewhere? There is considerable heat reflected from a sandy bottom where the water is shallow, and at these places it is always sandy and shallow, but I doubt if this actually makes the water warmer, though it may melt the more opaque ice which absorbs it. The fact that Holt bend, which is deep, is late to freeze, being narrow, seems to prove it to be the swiftness of the water, and not reflected heat that prevents freezing. The water is apparently kept warm under the ice and down next to the unfrozen earth, and by a myriad springs from within the bowels of the earth.

Dec. 30, 1840. . . . Our Golden Age must after all be a pastoral one; we would be simple men in ignorance, and not accomplished in wisdom. We want great peasants more than great heroes. The sun would shine along the highway to some purpose, if we would unlearn our wisdom and practice illiterate truth henceforth. . . . Let us grow to the full stature of our humbleness ere we aspire to be greater. — It is great praise in the poet [Virgil] to have made husbandry famous.

"In the cool spring, when cool moisture from the hoary mountains flows,
And the mouldering clod is dissolved by the zephyr,
Then straightway let the bull with deep-pressed plow begin
To groan, and the share, worn by the furrow, to shine."

Georg. i. 43.

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And again when the husbandman conducts water down the slope to restore his thirsty crops,

"That, falling, makes a hoarse murmur among the smooth rocks, and tempers the parching fields with its bubbling streams." — *Ibid.* 109.

Describing the end of the Golden Age and the commencement of the reign of Jupiter, he says:

"He shook honey from the leaves, and removed fire,
And stayed the wine everywhere flowing in rivers
That experience, by meditating, might invent various arts
By degrees, and seek the blade of corn in furrows,
And strike out hidden fire from the veins of the flint."

Ibid. 131.

Dec. 30, 1841. . . .

Within the circuit of this plodding life
There are moments of an azure hue,
And as unpolluted, fair, as is the violet
Or anemone, when the spring strews them
By some south wood side; which make untrue
The best philosophy which has so poor an aim
But to console man for his grievance here.
I have remembered, when the winter came,
High in my chamber, in the frosty nights,
How, in the summer past, some
Unrecorded beam slanted across
Some upland pasture where the Johnswort grew,
Or heard, amidst the verdure of my mind,
The bee's long smothered hum;
So, by the cheap economy of God,
Made rich to go upon my wintry work again.

. . . . . .

When the snow is falling thick and fast, the flakes nearest you seem to be driving straight to the ground, while the more distant seem to

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float in the air in a quivering bank, like feathers, or like birds at play, and not as if sent on any errand. So, at a little distance, all the works of nature proceed with sport and frolic. They are more in the eye, and less in the deed.

Dec. 30, 1851. . . . This afternoon, being on Fair Haven Hill, I heard the sound of a saw, and soon after from the cliff saw two men sawing down a noble pine beneath, about forty rods off, . . . the last of a dozen or more which were left when the forest was cut, and for fifteen years have waved in solitary majesty over the sproutland. I saw them like beavers or insects gnawing at the trunk of this noble tree, the diminutive manikins with their cross-cut saw which could scarcely span it. It towered up a hundred feet, as I afterwards found by measurement, one of the tallest probably in the township, and straight as an arrow, but slanting a little toward the hillside, its top seen against the frozen river and the hill of Conantum. I watch closely to see when it begins to move. Now the sawers stop, and with an axe open it a little on the side toward which it leans, that it may break the faster, and now their saw goes again. Now surely it is going; it is inclined one quarter of the quadrant, and breathless I expect its crashing fall. But no, I was mistaken. It has not moved an inch. It stands at the same

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angle as at first. It is fifteen minutes yet to its fall. Still its branches wave in the wind as if it were destined to stand for a century, and the wind soughs through its needles as of yore; it is still a forest tree, the most majestic tree that waves over Musketaquid. The silvery sheen of the sunlight is reflected from its needles, it still affords an inaccessible crotch for the squirrel's nest, not a lichen has forsaken its mast-like stem, its raking mast; the hill is the hulk. Now, now is the moment, the manikins at its base are fleeing from their crime. They have dropped the guilty saw and axe. How slowly and majestically it starts, as if it were only swayed by a summer breeze, and would return without a sigh to its location in the air, and now it fans the hillside with its fall, and lies down to its bed in the valley from which it is never to rise, as softly as a feather, folding its green mantle about it like a warrior, as if, tired of standing, it embraced the earth with silent joy, returning its elements to the dust again. But, hark! . . . you only saw, you did not hear. There now comes up a deafening crash to these rocks, advertising you that even trees do not die without a groan. . . . I went down and measured it. It was four feet in diameter where it was sawed, and about a hundred feet long. Before I had reached it, the axemen had

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already half divested it of its branches. Its gracefully spreading top was a perfect wreck on the hillside, as if it had been made of glass, and the tender cones of one year's growth upon its summit appealed in vain and too late to the mercy of the chopper. Already he has measured it with his axe, and marked off the small logs it will make. It is lumber. . . . When the fish hawk in the spring revisits the banks of the Musketaquid, he will circle in vain to find his accustomed perch, and the hen hawk will mourn for the pines lofty enough to protect her brood. . . . I hear no knell tolled, I see no procession of mourners in the streets or the woodland aisles. The squirrel has leaped to another tree, the hawk has circled farther off, and has now settled upon a new eyrie, but the woodman is preparing to lay his axe at the root of that also.

Dec. 30, 1853. In winter every man is, to a slight extent, dormant, just as some animals are but partially awake, though not commonly classed with those that hibernate. The summer circulations are to some extent stopped, the range of his afternoon walk is somewhat narrower, he is more or less confined to the highway and woodpath; the weather oftener shuts him up in his burrow, he begins to feel the access of dormancy, and to assume the spherical form of the marmot, the nights are longest, he

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is often satisfied if he only gets to the post office in the course of the day. The arctic voyagers are obliged to invent and willfully engage in active amusements to keep themselves awake and alive. . . . Even our experience is some thing like wintering in the pack.

Dec. 30, 1856. What an evidence it is, after all, of civilization, or of a capacity for improvement, that savages like our Indians, who, in their protracted wars, stealthily slay men, women, and children without mercy, with intense pleasure, who delight to burn, torture, and devour one another, proving themselves more inhuman in these respects even than beasts, what a wonderful evidence it is, I say, of their capacity for improvement, that even they can enter into the most formal compact or treaty of peace, burying the hatchet, etc., and treating with each other with as much consideration as the most enlightened states. You would say that they had a genius for diplomacy as well as for war. — Consider that Iroquois, torturing his captive, roasting him before a slow fire, biting off the fingers of him alive, and finally eating the heart of him dead, betraying not the slightest evidence of humanity, and now behold him in the council chamber where he meets the representatives of the hostile nation to treat of peace, conducting with such perfect dignity and decorum, betraying

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such a sense of justice. These savages are equal to us civilized men in their treaties, and I fear not essentially worse in their wars.

Dec. 30, 1859. . . . P. M. Going by D——'s I see a shrike perched on the tip top of the topmost, upright twig of an English cherry-tree before his house, standing square on the topmost bud, balancing himself by a slight motion of his tail from time to time. I have noticed this habit of the bird before. You would suppose it inconvenient for so large a bird to maintain its footing there. Scared by my passing in the road he flew off, and I thought I would see if he alighted in a similar place. He flew toward a young elm, whose higher twigs were much more slender, though not quite so upright as those of the cherry, and I thought he might be excused if he alighted on the side of one; but no, to my surprise, he alighted without any trouble upon the very top of one of the highest of all, and looked around as before. . . .

What a different phenomenon a muskrat now from what it is in summer. Now, if one floats or swims, its whole back out, or crawls out upon the ice at one of those narrow oval water spaces, some twenty rods long (in calm weather, smooth mirrors), in a broad frame of white ice or yet whiter snow, it is seen at once, as conspicuous (or more so) as a fly on a window-pane or a

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mirror. But in summer, how many hundreds crawl along the weedy shore, or plunge in the long river unsuspected by the boatman!

Dec. 30, 1860. . . . It is remarkable how universally, as respects soil and exposure, the whortleberry family is distributed with us. One kind or another flourishes in every soil and locality. The Pennsylvania and Canada blueberries especially in elevated, cool, and airy places, on hills and mountains, in openings in the woods and in sproutlands, the high blueberry in swamps, and the low blueberry in intermediate places, or almost anywhere but in swamps hereabouts. The family thus ranges from the highest mountain tops to the lowest swamps, and forms the prevailing shrub of a great part of New England. Not only is this true of the family, but hereabouts of the genus, *Gaylussacia*, or the huckleberry proper, alone. I do not know of a spot where any shrub grows in this neighborhood, but one or another species or variety of the *Gaylussacia* may also grow there. . . . Such care has nature taken to furnish to birds and quadrupeds, and to men, a palatable berry of this kind, slightly modified by soil and climate, wherever the consumer may chance to be. Corn and potatoes, apples and pears have comparatively a narrow range, but we can fill our basket with whortleberries on the summit

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of Mt. Washington, above almost all the shrubs with which we are familiar, the same kind which they have in Greenland, and again, when we get home, in the lowest swamps, with a kind which the Greenlander never found. — First, there is the early, dwarf blueberry, the smallest of the whortleberry shrubs, the first to ripen its fruit, not commonly erect, but more or less reclined, often covering the earth with a sort of dense matting. The twigs are green, the flowers commonly white. Both the shrub and its fruit are the most tender and delicate of any that we have. The *Vaccinium Canadense* may be considered a more northern form of the same. — Some ten days later comes the high blueberry, or swamp blueberry, the commonest stout shrub of our swamps, of which I have been obliged to cut down not a few, when running lines in surveying through the low woods. They are a pretty sure indication of water, and when I see their dense curving tops ahead, I prepare to wade or for a wet foot. The flowers have an agreeable, sweet, and very promising fragrance, and a handful of them plucked and eaten have a subacid taste agreeable to some palates. — At the same time with the last, the common low blueberry is ripe. This is an upright slender shrub, with a few long, wand-like branches, with green bark and glaucous green leaves, its

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recent shoots crimson-colored. The flowers have a considerably rosy tinge, a delicate tint. The last two kinds are more densely flowered than the others. — The huckleberry is an upright shrub, more or less stout according to its exposure to the sun and air, with a spreading, bushy top, a dark brown bark and thick leaves, the recent shoots red. The flowers are much more red than those of the others.

As in old times they who dwelt on the heath, remote from towns, were backward to adopt the doctrines which prevailed there, and were therefore called heathen, so we dwellers in the huckleberry pastures, which are our heathlands, are slow to adopt the notions of large towns and cities, and may perchance be nicknamed huckleberry people. But the worst of it is that the emissaries of the towns care more for our berries than we for their doctrines. In those days the very race had got a bad name, and *ethnicus* was only another name for heathen.

All our hills are or have been huckleberry hills, — the three hills of Boston, and no doubt Bunker Hill among the rest.

In May and June all our hills and fields are adorned with a profusion of the pretty little, more or less bell-shaped flowers of this family, commonly turned toward the earth, and more or less tinged with red or pink, and resounding

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with the hum of insects, each one the forerunner of a berry the most natural, wholesome, and palatable that the soil can produce. — The early low blueberry, which I will call "bluet," adopting the name from the Canadians, is probably the prevailing kind of whortleberry in New England, for the high blueberry and huckleberry are unknown in many sections.

In many New Hampshire towns, a neighboring mountain top is the common berry field of many villages, and in the season such a summit will be swarming with pickers. A hundred at once will rush thither from the surrounding villages, with pails and buckets of all descriptions, especially on a Sunday, which is their leisure day. When camping on such ground, thinking myself out of the world, I have had my solitude very unexpectedly interrupted by such a company, and found that week days were the only Sabbath days there. . . . The mountain tops of New Hampshire, often lifted above the clouds, are thus covered with this beautiful blue fruit in greater profusion than any garden.

What though the woods be cut down. This emergency was long ago foreseen and provided for by nature, and the interregnum is not allowed to be a barren one. She is full of resources, and not only begins instantly to heal that scar, but she consoles and refreshes us with fruits

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such as the forest did not produce. . . . As the sandal wood is said to diffuse its perfume around the woodman who cuts it, so, in this case, Nature rewards with unexpected fruits the hand that lays her waste.

Dec. 31, 1837. As the least drop of wine tinges the whole goblet, so the least particle of truth colors our whole life. It is never isolated, or simply added as treasure to our stock. When any real progress is made, we unlearn and learn anew what we thought we knew before.

Dec. 31, 1840. . . . There must be respiration as well as aspiration. We should not walk on tiptoe, but healthily expand to our full circumference on the soles of our feet. . . . If aspiration be repeated long without respiration, it will be no better than expiration, or simply losing one's breath. In the healthy, for every aspiration there will be a respiration which is to make his idea take shape, and give its tone to the character. Every time he steps buoyantly up, he steps solidly down again, and stands the firmer on the ground for his independence of it. We should fetch the whole heel, sole, and toe horizontally down to earth. Let not ours be a wiped virtue, as men go about with an array of clean linen, but unwashed as a fresh flower, not a clean Sunday garment, but better as a soiled week-day one.

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Dec. 31, 1850. . . . The blue jays evidently notify each other of the presence of an intruder, and will sometimes make a great chattering about it, and so communicate the alarm to other birds, and to beasts.

Dec. 31, 1851. The third warm day; now overcast and beginning to drizzle. Still it is inspiriting as the brightest weather, though the sun surely is not going to shine. There is a latent light in the mist, as if there were more electricity than usual in the air. There are warm, foggy days in winter which excite us. — It reminds me, this thick, spring-like weather, that I have not enough valued and attended to the pure clarity and brilliancy of the winter skies. . . . Shall I ever in summer evenings see so celestial a reach of blue sky contrasting with amber as I saw a few days since. The day sky in winter corresponds for clarity to the night sky in which the stars shine and twinkle so brightly in this latitude.

I am too late, perhaps, to see the sand foliage in the deep cut; should have been there day before yesterday. It is now too wet and soft. Yet in some places it is perfect. I see some perfect leopard's paws. These things suggest that there is motion in the earth as well as on the surface; it lives and grows. . . . I seem to see some of the life that is in the spring bud

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and blossom, more intimately, nearer its fountain head, the fancy sketches and designs of the artist. It is more simple and primitive growth; as if for ages sand and clay might have thus flowed into the forms of foliage, before plants were produced to clothe the earth. . . .

I observed this afternoon the old Irish woman at the shanty in the woods, sitting out on the hillside bare-headed in the rain, and on the icy, though thawing ground, knitting. She comes out like the ground squirrel, at the least intimation of warmer weather, while I walk still in a great coat, and under an umbrella. She will not have to go far to be buried, so close she lives to the earth. Such Irish as these are naturalizing themselves at a rapid rate, and threaten at last to displace the Yankees, as the latter have the Indians. The process of acclimation is rapid with them. They draw long breaths in the American sick-room. . . . There is a low mist in the woods. It is a good day to study lichens. The view so confined, it compels your attention to near objects, and the white background reveals the disks of the lichens distinctly. They appear more loose, flowing, expanded, flattened out, the colors brighter for the damp. The round, greenish-yellow lichens on the white pines loom through the mist (or are seen dimly) like shields whose devices you

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would fain read. The trees appear all at once covered with the crop of lichens and mosses of all kinds. . . . This is their solstice, and your eyes run swiftly through the mist to these things only. On every fallen twig even, that has lain under the snows, as well as on the trees, they appear erect, and now first to have attained their full expansion. Nature has a day for each of her creations. To-day it is an exhibition of lichens at Forest Hall. The livid green of some, the fruit of others, they eclipse the trees they cover; the red, club-shaped (baobab tree-like), on the stumps, the erythrean stumps; ah, beautiful is decay. True, as Thales said, the world was made out of water. That is the principle of all things.

I do not lay myself open to my friends? The owner of the casket locks it and unlocks it.— Treat your friends for what you know them to be. Regard no surfaces. Consider not what they did but what they intended. Be sure, as you know them, you are known of them again. Last night I treated my dearest friend ill. Though I could find some excuse for myself, it is not such excuse as under the circumstances could be pleaded in so many words. Instantly, I blamed myself, and sought an opportunity to make atonement, but the friend avoided me, and with kinder feelings even than before I was obliged

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to depart. And now this morning I feel that it is too late to speak of the trifle, and besides I doubt now, in the cool morning, if I have a right to suppose such intimate and serious relations as afford a basis for the apology I had conceived, for even magnanimity must ask this poor earth for a field. The virtues even wait for invitation. Yet I am resolved to know that one centrally, through thick and thin, and though we should be cold to one another, though we should never speak to one another, I will know that inward and essential love may exist under a superficial coldness, and that the laws of attraction speak louder than words. My true relation this instant shall be my apology for my false relation the last instant. I made haste to cast off my injustice as scurf. I own it less than another. I have absolutely done with it. Let the idle and wavering and apologizing friend appropriate it. Methinks our estrangement is only like the divergence of the branches which unite in the stem.

To-night I heard Mrs. —— lecture on womanhood. The most important fact about the lecture was that a woman gave it, and in that respect it was suggestive. Went to see her afterward. But the interview added nothing to the impression, rather subtracted from it. She was a woman in the too common sense, after all

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You had to fire small charges. I did not have a finger in once, for fear of blowing away all her works, and so ending the game. You had to substitute courtesy for sense and argument. It requires nothing less than a chivalric feeling to sustain a conversation with a lady. I carried her lecture for her in my pocket wrapped in her handkerchief. My pocket exhales cologne to this moment. The championess of woman's rights still asks you to be a ladies' man. I can't fire a salute for fear some of the guns may be shotted. I had to unshot all the guns in truth's battery, and fire powder and wadding only. Certainly the heart is only for rare occasions; the intellect affords the most unfailing entertainment. It would only do to let her feel the wind of the ball. I fear that to the last, women's lectures will demand mainly courtesy from men. . . .

Denuded pines stand in the clearings with no old cloak to wrap about them, only the apexes of their cones entire, telling a pathetic story of the companions that clothed them. So stands a man. His clearing around him, he has no companions on the hills. The lonely traveler, looking up, wonders why he was left when his companions were taken.

Dec. 31, 1853. . . . It is a remarkable sight, this snow-clad landscape, the fences and bushes half-buried, and the warm sun on it. . . . The

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town and country is now so still, no rattle of wagons nor even jingle of sleigh bells, every tread being as with woolen feet. . . . In such a day as this, the crowing of a cock is heard very far and distinctly. . . . There are a few sounds still which never fail to affect me, the notes of a wood thrush and the sound of a vibrating chord. These affect me as many sounds once did often, and as almost all should. The strains of the æolian harp and of the wood thrush are the truest and loftiest preachers that I know now left on this earth. I know of no missionaries to us heathen comparable to them. They, as it were, lift us up in spite of ourselves. They intoxicate and charm us. Where was that strain mixed, into which this world was dropped, but as a lump of sugar, to sweeten the draught? I would be drunk, drunk, drunk, dead drunk to this world with it forever. He that hath ears, let him hear. The contact of sound with a human ear whose hearing is pure and unimpaired is coincident with an ecstasy. Sugar is not so sweet to the palate as sound to a healthy ear. The hearing of it makes men brave. . . . These things alone remind me of my immortality, which is else a fable. As I hear, I realize and see clearly what at other times I only dimly remember. I get the value of the earth's extent and the sky's depth. It . . . gives me the

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freedom of all bodies, of all nature. I leave my body in a trance, and accompany the zephyr and the fragrance.

Walden froze completely over last night. It is, however, all snow-ice, as it froze while it was snowing hard. It looks like frozen yeast somewhat. I waded about in the woods through the snow, which certainly averaged considerably more than two feet deep where I went. . . . Saw probably an otter's track, very broad and deep, as if a log had been drawn along. It was nearly as obvious as a man's track; made before last night's snow fell. The creature from time to time went beneath the snow for a few feet to the leaves. This animal I should probably never see the least trace of were it not for the snow, the great revealer.

I saw some squirrels' nests of oak leaves high in the trees, and directly after a gray squirrel tripping along the branches of an oak and shaking down the snow. He ran down the oak on the side opposite from me over the snow and up another tall and slender oak, also on the side opposite from me which was bare, and leaped down about four feet into a white pine, and then ran up still higher into its thick green top and clung behind the main stem, perfectly still. . . . This he did to conceal himself, though obliged to come nearer to me to accomplish it.

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His fore feet make but one track in the snow, about three inches broad, and his hind feet another similar one, a foot or more distant, and there are two sharp furrows forward, and two slighter ones backward from each track. This track he makes when running, but I am not absolutely certain that all the four feet do not come together. There were many holes in the snow where he had gone down to the leaves and brought up acorns, which he had eaten on the nearest twig, dropping fine bits of shell about on the snow, and also bits of lichen and bark. I noticed the bits of acorn shells, etc., by the holes in many places. At times he made a continuous narrow trail in the snow, somewhat like a small muskrat, where he had walked or gone several times, and he would go under a few feet and come out again.

Dec. 31, 1854. P. M. On river to Fair Haven Pond. A beautiful, clear, not very cold day. The shadows on the snow are indigo blue. The pines look very dark. The white-oak leaves are a cinnamon color, the black and red (?) oak leaves a reddish-brown or leather color. . . . A partridge rises from the alders and skims across the river at its widest part, just before me; a fine sight. . . . How glorious the perfect stillness and peace of the winter landscape.

Dec. 31, 1859. . . . How vain to try to

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teach youth or anybody truths. They can only learn them after their own fashion, and when they get ready. I do not mean by this to condemn our system of education, but to show what it amounts to. A hundred boys at college are drilled in physics, metaphysics, languages, etc. There may be one or two in each hundred, prematurely old, perchance, who approach the subject from a similar point of view to their teachers', but as for the rest and the most promising, it is like agricultural chemistry to so many Indians. They get a valuable drilling, it may be, but they do not learn what you profess to teach. They at most only learn where the arsenal is, in case they should ever want to use any of its weapons. The young men, being young, necessarily listen to the lecturer on history, just as they do to the singing of a bird. They expect to be affected by something he may say. It is a kind of poetic pabulum and imagery that they get. Nothing comes quite amiss to their mill.

Jan. 1, 1841. All, men and women, woo one. There is a fragrance in their breath.

"Nosque — equis oriens afflavit anhelis."

And if now they hate, I muse as in sombre, cloudy weather, not despairing of the absent ray.

"Illic sera rubens accendit lumina vesper."

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Jan. 1, 1842. . . . The virtuous soul possesses a fortitude and hardihood which not the grenadier nor pioneer can match. It never shrinks. It goes singing to its work. Effort is its relaxation. The rude pioneer work of the world has been done by the most devoted worshipers of beauty. . . . In winter is their campaign. They never go into quarters. They are elastic under the heaviest burden, under the extremest physical suffering.

Jan. 1, 1852. . . . I have observed that one mood is the natural critic of another. When possessed with a strong feeling on any subject foreign to the one I may be writing on, I know very well what of good and what of bad I have written on the latter. It looks to me now as it will ten years hence. My life is then earnest, and will tolerate no makeshifts nor nonsense. What is tinsel, or euphuism, or irrelevant is revealed to such a touchstone. In the light of a strong feeling all things take their places, and truth of every kind is seen as such. Now let me read my verses, and I will tell you if the god has had a hand in them. I wish to survey my composition for a moment from the least favorable point of view. I wish to be translated to the future, and look at my work as it were at a structure on the plain, to observe what portions have crumbled under the influence of the elements.

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9.30 P. M. To Fair Haven. Moon little more than half full. Not a cloud in the sky. It is a remarkably warm night for the season, the ground almost entirely bare. The stars are dazzlingly bright. The fault may be in my own barrenness, but methinks there is a certain poverty about the winter night's sky. The stars of higher magnitude are more bright and dazzling, and therefore appear more near and numerable; while those that appear indistinct and infinitely remote in the summer, giving the impression of unfathomableness in the sky, are scarcely seen at all. The front halls of heaven are so brilliantly lighted that they quite eclipse the more remote. The sky has fallen many degrees.

The worst kind of tick to get under your skin is yourself in an irritable mood. . . . These are some of the differences between this and the autumn or summer night: the stiffened glebe under my feet, the dazzle and seeming nearness of the stars, the duller gleam from ice on rivers and ponds, the white spots in the fields and streaks by the wall sides where are the remains of drifts yet unmelted. Perhaps the only thing that spoke to me in this walk was the bare, lichen-covered, gray rock at the cliff, in the moonlight, naked and almost warm as in summer.

I have so much faith in the power of truth to

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communicate itself that I should not believe a friend, if he should tell me that he had given credit to an unjust rumor concerning me. Suspect! Ah, yes, you may suspect a thousand things, but I well know that what you suspect most confidently of all is just the truth. Your other doubts but flavor this your main suspicion. They are the condiments which, taken alone, do simply bite the tongue. . . .

Jan. 1, 1853. This morning we have something between ice and frost on the trees, etc. The rocks cased in ice look like alum rocks. This, not frozen mist or frost, but frozen drizzle, collected around the slightest cores, gives prominence to the least withered herbs and grasses. Where yesterday was a plain, smooth field, appears now a teeming crop of fat, icy herbage. The stems of the herbs on the north side are enlarged from ten to one hundred times. The addition is so universally on the north side that a traveler could not lose the points of the compass to-day, though it should be never so dark; for every blade of grass would serve to guide him, telling from which side the storm came yesterday. These straight stems of grasses stand up like white batons, or sceptres, and make a conspicuous foreground to the landscape, from six inches to three feet high. C. thought that these fat, icy branches on the withered grass and

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herbs had no nucleus, but looking closer I showed him the fine, black, wiry threads on which they impinged, which made him laugh with surprise. . . . The clover and sorrel send up a dull, green gleam through this icy coat, like strange plants. . . . Some weeds bear the ice in masses; some, like the trumpet weed and tansy, in balls for each dried flower. What a crash of jewels as you walk! The most careless walker, who never deigned to look at these humble weeds before, cannot help observing them now. This is why the herbage is left to stand dry in the fields all winter. Upon a solid foundation of ice stand out, pointing in all directions between N. W. and N. E., or within the limits of 90°, little spicula, or crystallized points, half an inch, or more, in length. Upon the dark, glazed, plowed ground, where a mere wiry stem rises, its north side is thickly clad with these snow-white spears, like some Indian head-dress, as if it had attracted all the frost. I saw a prinos bush full of large berries by the wall in Hubbard's field. Standing on the west side, the contrast of the red berries with their white incrustation or prolongation on the north was admirable. I thought I had never seen the berries so dazzlingly bright. The whole north side of the bush, berries and stock, was beautifully incrusted, and when I went round to

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the north side the redness of the berries came softened through, and tingeing the allied snow-white bush, like an evening sky beyond. These adjoined snow or ice berries, being beset within the limits of 90° on the N. with those icy particles or spicula, between which the red glow, and sometimes the clear red itself, was sometimes visible, produced the appearance of a raspberry bush full of over-ripe fruit.

Standing on the north side of a bush or tree, looking against the sky, you see only the white ghost of a tree, without a mote of earthiness; but as you go round it, the dark core comes into view. It makes all the odds imaginable whether you are traveling N. or S. The drooping birches along the edges of woods are the most feathery, fairy-like ostrich plumes, and the color of their trunks increases the delusion. The weight of the ice gives to the pines the forms which northern trees, like the firs, constantly wear, bending and twisting the branches; for the twigs and plumes of the pines, being frozen, remain as the wind held them, and new portions of the trunk are exposed. Seen from the N. there is no greenness in the pines, and the character of the tree is changed. The willows along the edge of the river look like sedge in the meadows. The sky is overcast, and a fine snowy hail and rain is falling, and these ghost-like trees make a scen-

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ery which reminds you of Spitzbergen. I see now the beauty of the causeway by the bridge, alders below swelling into the road, overtopped by willows and maples. The fine grasses and shrubs in the meadow rise to meet and mingle with the drooping willows, and the whole makes an indistinct impression like a mist. Through all this, the road runs toward those white, ice-clad, ghostly or fairy trees in the distance, toward spirit-land. The pines are as white as a counterpane, with raised embroidery and white tassels and fringes. Each fascicle of leaves or needles is held apart by an icy club surmounted by a little snowy or icy ball. Finer than the Saxon arch is this path running under the pines, roofed not with crossing boughs, but drooping, ice-covered, irregular twigs. In the midst of this stately pine, towering like the solemn ghost of a tree, I see the white, ice-clad boughs of other trees appearing, of a different character; sometimes oaks with leaves incrusted, or fine-sprayed maples or walnuts. But finer than all, this red oak, its leaves incrusted like shields a quarter of an inch thick, and a thousand fine spicula like long serrations at right angles with their planes upon the edges. It produces an indescribably rich effect, the color of the leaf coming softened through the ice, a delicate fawn of many shades. Where the plumes of the pitch

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pine are short and spreading close to the trunk, sometimes perfect cups or rays are formed. Pitch pines present rough, massy grenadier plumes, each having a darker spot or cavity in the end where you look in to the bud. I listen to the booming of the pond as if it were a reasonable creature. I return at last in the rain, and am coated with a glaze, like the fields. . . .

After talking with uncle Charles, the other night, about the worthies of this country, Webster and the rest, as usual, considering who were geniuses and who not, I showed him up to bed; and when I had got into bed myself I heard the chamber door opened, after eleven o'clock, and he called out in an earnest, stentorian voice, loud enough to wake the whole house, "Henry! was John Quincy Adams a genius?" "No, I think not," was my reply. "Well, I did n't think he was," answered he.

Jan. 1, 1854. Le Jeune, referring to the death of a young Frenchwoman who had devoted her life to the savages of Canada, uses this expression: "Finally this beautiful soul detached itself from its body the 15th of March," etc.

The drifts mark the standstill or equilibrium between the currents of air or particular winds. In our greatest snow-storms, the wind being northerly, the greatest drifts are on the south

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side of houses and fences. . . . I notice that in the angle made by our house and shed, a S. W. exposure, the snow-drift does not lie close about the pump, but is a foot off, forming a circular bowl, showing that there was an eddy about it. The snow is like a mould, showing the form of the eddying currents of air which have been impressed on it, while the drift and all the rest is that which fell between the currents or where they counterbalanced each other. These boundary lines are mountain barriers.

The white-in-tails, or grass finches, linger pretty late, flitting in flocks. They come only so near winter as the white in their tails indicates. . . .

The snow buntings and the tree sparrows are the true spirits of the snow-storm. They are the animated beings that ride upon it and have their life in it.

The snow is the great betrayer. It not only shows the track of mice, otters, etc., etc., which else we should rarely, if ever, see, but the tree sparrows are more plainly seen against its white ground, and they in turn are attracted by the dark weeds it reveals. It also drives the crows and other birds out of the woods to the villages for food. We might expect to find in the snow the footprint of a life superior to our own, of which no zoölogy takes cognizance. Is there no

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trace of a nobler life than that of an otter or an escaped convict to be looked for in it? Shall we suppose that is the only life that has been abroad in the night? It is only the savage that can see the track of no higher life than an otter's. Why do the vast snow plains give us pleasure, the twilight of the bent and half-buried woods? Is not all there consonant with virtue, justice, purity, courage, magnanimity; and does not all this amount to the track of a higher life than the otter's, — a life which has not gone by and left a footprint merely, but is there with its beauty, its music, its perfume, its sweetness, to exhilarate and recreate us? All that we perceive is the impress of its spirit. If there is a perfect government of the world according to the highest laws, do we find no trace of intelligence there, whether in the snow, or the earth, or in ourselves, — no other trail but such as a dog can scent? Is there none which an angel can detect and follow, — none to guide a man in his pilgrimage, which water will not conceal? Is there no odor of sanctity to be perceived? Is its trail too old? Have mortals lost the scent? . . . Are there not hunters who seek for something higher than foxes, with judgment more discriminating than the senses of fox-hounds, who rally to a nobler music than that of the hunting-horn? As there is contention among the fishermen who

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shall be the first to reach the pond as soon as the ice will bear, in spite of the cold; as the hunters are forward to take the field as soon as the first snow has fallen, so he who would make the most of his life for discipline must be abroad early and late, in spite of cold and wet, in pursuit of nobler game, whose traces are there most distinct, — a life which we seek not to destroy, but to make our own; which when pursued does not earth itself, does not burrow downward, but upward, takes not to the trees, but to the heavens, as its home; which the hunter pursues with winged thoughts and aspirations (these the dogs that tree it), rallying his pack with the bugle notes of undying faith. . . . Do the Indian and hunter only need snow-shoes, while the saint sits indoors in embroidered slippers?

Jan. 1, 1856. . . . P. M. To Walden. . . . On the ice at Walden are very beautiful large leaf crystals in great profusion. The ice is frequently thickly covered with them for many rods. They seem to be connected with the rosettes, a running together of them, look like a loose bunch of small white feathers springing from a tuft of down, for their shafts are lost in a tuft of fine snow like the down about the shaft of a feather, as if a feather bed had been shaken over the ice. They are, on a close examination, surprisingly perfect leaves, like ferns, only very

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broad for their length, and commonly more on one side the midrib than the other. They are from an inch to an inch and a half long, and three fourths of an inch wide, and slanted, where I look, from the S. W. They have first a very distinct midrib, though so thin that they cannot be taken up; then distinct ribs branching from this, commonly opposite; and minute ribs springing again from these last, as in many ferns, the last running to each crenation in the border. How much farther they are subdivided the naked eye cannot discern. They are so thin and fragile that they melt under your breath while you are looking closely at them. A fisherman says they were much finer in the morning. In other places the ice is strewn with a different kind of frost-work, in little patches, as if oats had been spilled, like fibres of asbestos rolled, one half or three fourths of an inch long and one eighth or more wide. Here and there patches of them a foot or two over, like some boreal grain spilled.

Jan. 1, 1858. . . . I have lately been surveying the Walden woods so extensively and minutely that I can see it mapped in my mind's eye as so many men's wood-lots, and am aware when I walk there that I am at a given moment passing from such a one's wood-lot to such another's. I fear this particular dry knowledge

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may affect my imagination and fancy, that it will not be easy to see so much wildness and native vigor there as formerly. No thicket will seem so unexplored now that I know a stake and stones may be found in it.

In these respects those Maine woods differ essentially from ours. There you are never reminded that the wilderness you are treading is after all some villager's familiar wood-lot, from which his ancestors have sledded their fuel for a generation or two, or some widow's thirds, minutely described in some old deed which is recorded, of which the owner has got a plan too, and of which the old boundmarks may be found every forty rods, if you will search.

What a history this Concord wilderness, which I affect so much, may have had! How many old deeds describe it, some particular wild spot, how it passed from Cole to Robinson, and Robinson to Jones, and from Jones finally to Smith in course of years. Some had cut it over three times during their lives, built walls and made a pasture of it perchance, and some burned it and sowed it with rye. . . .

In the Maine woods you are not reminded of these things. 'T is true the map informs you that you stand on land granted by the State to such an academy, or on Bingham's purchase; but these names do not impose on you, for you

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see nothing to remind you of the academy or of Bingham.

Jan. 2, 1841. . . . Every needle of the white pine trembles distinctly in the breeze, which on the sunny side gives the whole tree a shimmering, seething aspect. . . .

I stopped short in the path to-day to admire how the trees grow up without forethought, regardless of the time and circumstances. They do not wait, as men do. Now is the golden age of the sapling; earth, air, sun, and rain are occasion enough.

They were no better in primeval centuries. "The winter of" their "discontent" never comes. Witness the buds of the native poplar, standing gayly out to the frost, on the sides of its bare switches. They express a naked confidence.

With cheerful heart I could be a sojourner in the wilderness. I should be sure to find there the catkins of the alder. When I read of them in the accounts of northern adventurers by Baffin's Bay or Mackenzie's River, I see how even there too I could dwell. They are my little vegetable redeemers. Methinks my virtue will not flag ere they come again. They are worthy to have had a greater than Neptune or Ceres for their donor. Who was the benignant goddess that bestowed them on mankind?

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I saw a fox run across the pond to-day with the carelessness of freedom. As at intervals I traced his course in the sunshine, as he trotted along the ridge of a hill on the crust, it seemed as if the sun never shone so proudly, sheer down on the hillside, and the winds and woods were hushed in sympathy. I gave up to him sun and earth as to their true proprietor. He did not go in the sunshine, but the sunshine seemed to follow him. There was a visible sympathy between him and it.

Jan. 2, 1842. The ringing of the church bell is a much more melodious sound than any that is heard within the church. All great values are thus public, and undulate like sound through the atmosphere. Wealth cannot purchase any great private solace or convenience. Riches are only the means of sociality. I will depend on the extravagance of my neighbors for my luxuries; they will take care to pamper me, if I will be overfed. The poor man, who sacrificed nothing for the gratification, seems to derive a safer and more natural enjoyment from his neighbor's extravagance than he does himself. It is a new natural product, from the contemplation of which he derives new vigor and solace as from a natural phenomenon.

In moments of quiet and leisure my thoughts are more apt to revert to some natural than to any human relation.

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Chaucer's sincere sorrow in his latter days for the grossness of his earlier works, and that he "cannot recall and annul" what he had "written of the base and filthy love of men towards women, but alas, they are now continued from man to man," says he, "and I cannot do what I desire," is all very creditable to his character.

Jan. 2, 1853. 9 A. M. Down railroad to Cliffs. A clear day, a pure sky with cirrhi. In this clear air and bright sunlight, the ice-covered trees have a new beauty, especially the birches along under the edge of Warren's wood on each side of the railroad, bent quite to the ground in every kind of curve. At a distance, as you are approaching them endwise, they look like the white tents of Indians under the edge of the wood. The birch is thus remarkable, perhaps, from the feathery form of the tree, whose numerous small branches sustain so great weight, bending it to the ground; and, moreover, because, from the color of the bark, the core is less observable. The oaks not only are less pliant in the trunk, but have fewer and stiffer twigs and branches. The birches droop over in all directions, like ostrich feathers. Most wood paths are impassable now to a carriage, almost to a foot traveler, from the number of saplings and boughs bent over even to the ground in them. Both sides of the deep cut shine in the sun as if silver-plated,

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and the fine spray of a myriad bushes on the edge of the bank sparkle like silver. The telegraph wire is coated to ten times its size, and looks like a slight fence scalloping along at a distance. . . . When we climb the bank at Stow's wood-lot and come upon the piles of freshly split white pine wood (for he is ruthlessly laying it waste), the transparent ice, like a thick varnish, beautifully exhibits the color of the clear, tender, yellowish wood, pumpkin pine (?), and its grain. We pick our way over a bed of pine boughs a foot or two deep, covering the ground, each twig and needle thickly incrusted with ice, one vast gelid mass, which our feet crunch, as if we were walking through the cellar of some confectioner to the gods. The invigorating scent of the recently cut pines refreshes us, if that is any atonement for this devastation. . . . Especially now do I notice the hips, barberries, and winter-berries for their red. The red or purplish catkins of the alders are interesting as a winter fruit, and also of the birch. But few birds about. Apparently their granaries are locked up in ice, with which the grasses and buds are coated. Even far in the horizon the pine tops are turned to fir or spruce by the weight of the ice bending them down, so that they look like a spruce swamp. No two trees wear the ice alike. The short plumes and needles

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of the spruce make a very pretty and peculiar figure. I see some oaks in the distance, which, from their branches being curved and arched downward and massed, are turned into perfect elms, which suggests that this is the peculiarity of the elm. Few, if any, other trees are thus wisp-like, the branches gracefully drooping. I mean some slender red and white oaks which have been recently left in a clearing. Just apply a weight to the end of the boughs which will cause them to droop, and to each particular twig which will mass them together, and you have perfect elms. Seen at the right angle, each ice-incrusted blade of stubble shines like a prism with some color of the rainbow, intense blue, or violet, and red. The smooth field, clad the other day with a low wiry grass, is now converted into rough stubble land, where you walk with crunching feet. It is remarkable that the trees can ever recover from the burden which bends them to the ground. I should like to weigh a limb of this pitch pine. The character of the tree is changed. I have now passed the bars, and am approaching the Cliffs. The forms and variety of the ice are particularly rich here, there are so many low bushes and weeds before me as I ascend toward the sun, especially very small white pines almost merged in the ice-incrusted ground. All objects are to the eye polished

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silver. It is a perfect land of faery. Le Jeune describes the same in Canada in 1636: "Nos grands bois ne paroissoient qu'une forest de cristal." . . . The bells are particularly sweet this morning. I hear more, methinks, than ever before. . . . Men obey their call and go to the stove-warmed church, though God exhibits himself to the walker in a frosted bush to-day as much as he did in a burning one to Moses of old. We build a fire on the Cliffs. When kicking to pieces a pine stump for the fat knots which alone would burn this icy day, at the risk of spoiling my boots, having looked in vain for a stone, I thought how convenient would be an Indian stone axe to batter it with. The bark of white birch, though covered with ice, burned well. We soon had a roaring fire of fat pine on a shelf of rock from which we overlooked the icy landscape. The sun, too, was melting the ice on the rocks, and the water was purling downwards in dark bubbles exactly like polly-wogs. What a good word is flame, expressing the form and soul of fire, lambent, with forked tongue! We lit a fire to see it, rather than to feel it, it is so rare a sight these days. It seems good to have our eyes ache once more with smoke. What a peculiar, indescribable color has this flame! — a reddish or lurid yellow, not so splendid or full of light as of life and heat.

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These fat roots made much flame and a very black smoke, commencing where the flame left off, which cast fine flickering shadows on the rocks. There was some bluish-white smoke from the rotten part of the wood. Then there was the fine white ashes which farmers' wives sometimes use for pearlash.

Jan. 2, 1854. . . . The tints of the sunset sky are never purer and more ethereal than in the coldest winter days. This evening, though the colors are not brilliant, the sky is crystalline, and the pale fawn-tinged clouds are very beautiful. I wish to get on to a hill to look down on the winter landscape. We go about these days as if we were in fetters; we walk in the stocks, stepping into the holes made by our predecessors. . . . The team and driver have long since gone by, but I see the marks of his whiplash on the snow, its recoil; but, alas! these are not a complete tally of the strokes which fell upon the oxen's back. The unmerciful driver thought, perhaps, that no one saw him, but unwittingly he recorded each blow on the unspotted snow behind his back as in a book of life. To more searching eyes the marks of his lash are in the air. I paced partly through the pitch-pine wood, and partly the open field from the turnpike by the Lee place to the railroad from N. to S., more than one fourth of a mile, meas-

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uring at every ten paces. The average of sixty-five measurements up hill and down was nineteen inches. This, after increasing those in the woods by one inch (little enough), on account of the snow on the pines. . . . I think one would have to pace a mile on a N. and S. line, up and down hill, through woods and fields, to get a quite reliable result. The snow will drift sometimes the whole width of a field, and fill a road or valley beyond, so that it would be well your measuring included several such driftings. Very little reliance is to be put on the usual estimates of the depth of snow. I have heard different men set this snow at six, fifteen, eighteen, twenty-four, thirty-six, and forty-eight inches. My snow-shoes sank about four inches into the snow this morning, but more than twice as much the 29th.

On the N. side of the railroad, above the Red House crossing, the train has cut through a drift about one fourth of a mile long, and two to nine feet high, straight up and down. It reminds me of the Highlands, the Pictured Rocks, the side of an iceberg, etc. Now that the sun has just sunk below the horizon, it is wonderful what an amount of soft light it appears to be absorbing. There appears to be more day just here by its side than anywhere else. I can almost see to a depth of six inches into it. It is made translucent, it is so saturated with light.

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I have heard of one precious stone found in Concord, the cinnamon stone. A geologist has spoken of it as found in this town, and a farmer described to me one he once found, perhaps the same referred to by the other. He said it was as large as a brick, and as thick, and yet you could distinguish a pin through it, it was so transparent.

Jan. 2, 1855. . . . Yesterday [skating] we saw the pink light on the snow within a rod of us. The shadows of the bridges, etc., on the snow were a dark indigo blue.

Jan. 2, 1859. . . . Going up the hill through Stow's young oak wood-land, I listen to the sharp, dry rustle of the withered oak leaves. This is the voice of the wood now. It would be comparatively still and more dreary here in other respects, if it were not for these leaves that hold on. It sounds like the roar of the sea, and is inspiriting like that, suggesting how all the land is sea-coast to the aerial ocean. It is the sound of the surf, the rut, of an unseen ocean, — billows of air breaking on the forest, like water on itself or on sand and rocks. It rises and falls, swells and dies away, with agreeable alternation, as the sea surf does. Perhaps the landsmen can foretell a storm by it. It is remarkable how universal these grand murmurs are, these backgrounds of sound, — the surf,

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the wind in the forest, waterfalls, etc., — which yet to the ear and in their origin are essentially one voice, the earth voice, the breathing or snoring of the creature. The earth is our ship, and this is the sound of the wind in her rigging as we sail. Just as the inhabitant of Cape Cod hears the surf ever breaking on its shores, so we countrymen hear this kindred surf on the leaves of the forest. Regarded as a voice, though it is not articulate, as our articulate sounds are divided into vowels (though this is nearer a consonant sound), labials, dentals, palatals, sibilants, mutes, aspirates, etc., so this may be called folial or frondal, produced by air driven against the leaves, and comes nearest to our sibilants or aspirates.

Michaux said that white oaks might be distinguished by retaining their leaves in the winter, but as far as my observation goes they cannot be so distinguished. All our large oaks may retain a few leaves at the base of the lower limbs and about the trunk, though only a few, and the white oak scarcely more than the others; while the same trees, when young, are all alike thickly clothed in the winter, but the leaves of the white oak are the most withered and shriveled of them all.

There being some snow on the ground, I can easily distinguish the forest on the mountains

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(the Peterboro Hills, etc.), and tell which are forested, those parts and those mountains being dark, like a shadow. I cannot distinguish the forest thus far in summer.

When I hear the hypercritical quarreling about grammar and style, the position of the particles, etc., etc., stretching or contracting every speaker to certain rules, — Mr. Webster, perhaps, not having spoken according to Mr. Kirkham's rule, — I see they forget that the first requisite and rule is that expression shall be vital and natural, as much as the voice of a brute, or an interjection: first of all, mother tongue; and last of all, artificial or father tongue. Essentially, your truest poetic sentence is as free and lawless as a lamb's bleat. The grammarian is often one who can neither cry nor laugh, yet thinks he can express human emotions. So the posture-masters tell you how you shall walk, turning your toes out excessively, perhaps; but so the beautiful walkers are not made. . . .

Minott says that a fox will lead a dog on to the ice in order that he may get in. Tells of Jake Lakin losing a hound so, which went under the ice and was drowned below the Holt. . . . They used to cross the river there on the ice, going to market formerly.

Jan. 3, 1842. It is pleasant when one can

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relieve the grossness of the kitchen and the table by the simple beauty of his repast, so that there may be anything in it to attract the eye of the artist, even. I have been popping corn to-night, which is only a more rapid blossoming of the seed under a greater than July heat. The popped corn is a perfect winter flower, hinting of anemones and houstonias. . . . Here has bloomed for my repast such a delicate flower as will soon spring by the wall sides, and this is as it should be. Why should not Nature revel sometimes, and genially relax, and make herself familiar at my board? I would have my house a bower fit to entertain her. It is a feast of such innocence as might have snowed down; on my warm hearth sprang these cerealian blossoms; here was the bank where they grew. Methinks some such visible token of approval would always accompany the simple and healthy repast, — some such smiling or blessing upon it. Our appetite should always be so related to our taste, and our board be an epitome of the primeval table which Nature sets by hill and wood and stream for her dumb pensioners.

Jan. 3, 1852. . . . A spirit sweeps the string of the telegraph harp, and strains of music are drawn out suddenly, like the wire itself. . . . What becomes of the story of a tortoise shell on the seashore now? The world is young, and

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music is its infant voice. I do not despair of a world where you have only to stretch an ordinary wire from tree to tree to hear such strains drawn from it by New England breezes as make Greece and all antiquity seem poor in melody. Why was man so made as to be thrilled to his inmost being by the vibrating of a wire? Are not inspiration and ecstasy a more rapid vibration of the nerves swept by the inrushing excited spirit, whether zephyral or boreal in its character?

Jan. 3, 1853. . . . I love Nature partly because she is not man, but a retreat from him. None of his institutions control or pervade her. Here a different kind of right prevails. In her midst I can be glad with an entire gladness. If this world were all man, I could not stretch myself. I should lose all hope. He is constraint; she is freedom to me. He makes me wish for another world; she makes me content with this. None of the joys she supplies is subject to his rules and definitions. What he touches he taints. In thought he moralizes. One would think that no free, joyful labor was possible to him. How infinite and pure the least pleasure of which nature is basis compared with the congratulation of mankind! The joy which nature yields is like that afforded by the frank words of one we love.

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Man, man is the devil,
The source of all evil.

Methinks these prosers, with their saws and their laws, do not know how glad a man can be. What wisdom, what warning, can prevail against gladness? There is no law so strong which a little gladness may not transgress. I have a room all to myself. It is nature. It is a place beyond the jurisdiction of human governments. Pile up your books, the records of sadness, your saws and your laws, Nature is glad outside, and her many worms within will erelong topple them down. . . . Nature is a prairie for outlaws. There are two worlds, — the post-office and nature. I know them both. I continually forget mankind and their institutions, as I do a bank.

Jan. 3, 1856. It is astonishing how far a merely well-dressed and good looking man may go without being challenged by a sentinel. What is called good society will bid high for such.

The man whom the state has raised to high office, like that of governor, for instance, from some, it may be, honest but less respected calling, cannot return to his former humble but profitable pursuits, his old customers will be so shy of him. His ex-honorableness stands seriously in his way, whether he be a lawyer or a shopkeeper. He can't get ex-honorated. So he

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becomes a sort of state pauper, an object of charity on its hands, which the state is bound in honor to see through and provide with offices of similar respectability, that he may not come to want. The man who has been president becomes the ex-president, and can't travel or stay at home anywhere, but men will persist in paying respect to his ex-ship. It is cruel to remember his deeds so long. When his time is out, why can't they let the poor fellow go?

Jan. 3, 1861. Why should the ornamental tree society confine its labors to the highway only? An Englishman laying out his ground does not regard simply the avenues and walks. Does not the landscape deserve attention? What are the natural features which make a township handsome? A river, with its waterfalls and meadows, a lake, a hill, a cliff or individual rocks, a forest, and ancient trees standing singly. Such things are beautiful; they have a high use which dollars and cents never represent. If the inhabitants of a town were wise, they would seek to preserve these things, though at a considerable expense; for such things educate far more than any hired teachers, preachers, or any system of school education at present organized. Far the handsomest thing I saw in Boxboro was its noble oak wood. I doubt if there is a finer one in Massachusetts. Let the

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town keep it a century longer, and men will make pilgrimages to it from all parts of the country. And yet it would be very like the rest of New England if Boxboro were ashamed of that wood-land. I have since learned, however, that she is contented to let that forest stand, instead of the houses and farms that might supplant it, because the land pays a much larger tax to the town now than it would then. I said to myself, if the history of the town is written, the chief stress is probably laid on its parish, and there is not one word about the forest in it. It would be worth while if in each town a committee were appointed to see that the beauty of the town received no detriment. If we have the biggest bowlder in the country, then it should not belong to an individual, nor be made into a door-step. As in many countries precious metals belong to the crown, so here more precious natural objects of rare beauty should belong to the public. Not only the channel, but both banks of every river should be a public highway. It is not the only use of a river, to float on it. Think of a mountain top in the township, even to the minds of the Indians a sacred place, only accessible through private grounds, — a temple, as it were, which you cannot enter except at the risk of letting out or letting in somebody's cattle, — in fact the temple

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itself in this case private property, and standing in a man's cow-yard. New Hampshire courts have lately been deciding, as if it were for them to decide, whether the top of Mt. Washington belonged to A. or to B., and it being decided in favor of B., as I hear, he went up one winter with the proper officers and took formal possession. But I think that the top of Mt. Washington should not be private property; it should be but an opportunity for modesty and reverence, or if only to suggest that earth has higher uses than we commonly put her to. . . .

Thus we behave like oxen in a flower garden. The true fruit of nature can only be plucked with a delicate hand not bribed by any earthly reward, and a fluttering heart. No hired man can help us to gather this crop. How few ever get beyond feeding, clothing, sheltering, and warming themselves in this world, and begin to treat themselves as intellectual and moral beings. . . . Most men, it seems to me, do not care for Nature, and would sell their share in all her beauty, as long as they may live, for a stated sum. Thank God, men cannot as yet fly, and lay waste the sky as well as the earth. We are safe on that side for the present. We cut down the few old oaks which witnessed the transfer of the township from the Indian to the white man, and commence our museum with a cartridge-box taken from a British soldier in 1775.

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Jan. 4, 1841. I know a woman who is as true to me, and as incessant with her mild rebuke as the blue sky. When I stand under her cope, instantly all pretension drops off, and I am swept by an influence as by a wind and rain which remove all taint. I am fortunate that I can pass and repass before her each day, and prove my strength in her glances. She is far truer to me than to herself. Her eyes are like the windows of nature, through which I catch glimpses of the native land of the soul. From them comes a light which is not of the sun. His rays are in eclipse when they shine on me.

Jan. 4, 1850. The longest silence is the most pertinent question most pertinently put. Emphatically silent. The most important questions, whose answers concern us more than any others, are never put in any other way.

It is difficult for two strangers, mutually well disposed, so truly to bear themselves toward each other that a feeling of falseness and hollowness shall not soon spring up between them. The least anxiety to behave truly, vitiates the relation.

Jan. 4, 1853. To what I will call Yellow Birch Swamp, E. Hubbard's, in the north part of the town, . . . west of the Hunt pasture. There are more of these trees in it than anywhere else in the town that I know. How pleas-

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ing to stand near a new or rare tree; and few are so handsome as this; singularly allied to the black birch in its sweet checkerberry scent and its form, and to the canoe birch in its peeling or fringed and tasseled bark. The top is brush-like as in the black birch. The bark an exquisite . . . delicate gold color, curled off partly from the trunk with vertical clear or smooth spaces, as if a plane had been passed up the tree. The sight of these trees affects me more than California gold. I measured one five and two twelfths feet in circumference at six feet from the ground. We have the silver and the golden birch. This is like a fair, flaxen-haired sister of the dark-complexioned black birch, with golden ringlets. How lustily it takes hold of the swampy soil and braces itself. And here flows a dark cherry-wood or wine-colored brook over the iron-red sands in the sombre swamp, swampy wine. In an undress, this tree. Ah, the time will come when these will be all gone. Among the primitive trees. What sort of dryads haunt these? Blonde nymphs. Near by, the great pasture oaks with horizontal boughs. At Pratt's, the stupendous boughy branching elm, like vast thunderbolts stereotyped upon the sky, heaven-defying, sending back dark, vegetable bolts, as if flowing back in the channel of the lightning. — The white oaks have a few leaves

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about the crown of the trunk, in the lower part of the tree, like a tree within a tree. The tree is thus less wracked by the wind and ice. — In the twilight I went through the swamp, and the yellow birches sent forth a yellow gleam which each time made my heart beat faster. Occasionally you come to a dead and leaning white birch, beset with large fungi like ears or little shelves, with a rounded edge above. I walked with the yellow birch. The prinos is green within. If there were Druids whose temples were the oak groves, my temple is the swamp. Sometimes I was in doubt about a birch whose vest was buttoned, smooth and dark, till I came nearer and saw the yellow gleaming through, or where a button was off.

Jan. 4, 1857. . . . After spending four or five days surveying and drawing a plan, incessantly, I especially feel the need of putting myself in communication with nature again to recover my tone, to withdraw out of the wearying and unprofitable world of affairs. The things I have been doing have but a fleeting and accidental importance, however much men are immersed in them, and yield very little valuable fruit. I would fain have been wading through the woods and fields, and conversing with the sane snow. Having waded in the very shallowest stream of time, I would now bathe my temples

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in eternity. I wish again to participate in the serenity of nature, to share the happiness of the river and the woods. I thus from time to time break off my connection with eternal truths, and go with the shallow stream of human affairs, grinding at the mill of the Philistines. But when my task is done, with never-failing confidence, I devote myself to the infinite again. It would be sweet to deal with men more, I can imagine, but where dwell they? Not in the fields which I traverse.

Jan. 4, 1858. . . . That bright and warm reflection of sunlight from the insignificant edging of stubble was remarkable. I was coming down stream over the meadow on the ice, within four or five rods of the eastern shore, the sun on my left about a quarter of an hour above the horizon. The ice was soft and sodden, of a dull lead color, quite dark and reflecting no light, as I looked eastward, but my eyes caught, by accident, a singular, sunny brightness, reflected from the narrow border of stubble only three or four inches high, and as many feet wide perhaps, which rose along the edge of the ice at the foot of the hill. It was not a mere brightening of the bleached stubble, but the warm and yellow light of the sun, which, as appeared, it was peculiarly fitted to reflect. It was that amber light from the west which we sometimes witness after

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a storm, concentrated on the stubble, for the hill beyond was merely a dark russet, spotted with snow. All the yellow rays seemed to be reflected by this insignificant stubble alone, and when I looked more generally a little above it, seeing it with the under part of my eye, . . . the reflected light made its due impression . . . separated from the proper color of the stubble, and it glowed almost like a low, steady, and serene fire. It was precisely as if the sunlight had mechanically slid over the ice, and lodged against the stubble. It will be enough to say of something warmly and sunnily bright, that it glowed like lit stubble. It was remarkable that looking eastward this was the only evidence of the light in the west.

Jan. 5, 1841. I grudge to the record that lavish expenditure of love and grace which are due rather to the spoken thought. A man writes because he has no opportunity to speak. Why should he be the only mute creature, and his speech no part of the melody of the grove? He never gladdens the ear of nature, and ushers in no spring with his lays. — We are more anxious to speak than to be heard.

Jan. 5, 1842. I find that, whatever hindrances occur, I write just about the same amount of truth in my journal, for the record is more concentrated, and usually it is some very real and

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earnest life that interrupts. All flourishes are omitted. If I saw wood from morning to night, though I grieve that I could not observe the train of my thoughts during that time, yet in the evening, the few scrawled lines which describe my day's occupation will make the creaking of the saw more musical than my freest fancies could have been. . . .

I discover in Raleigh's verses the vices of the courtier. They are not equally sustained, as if his noble genius were warped by the frivolous society of the court. He was capable of rising to a remarkable elevation. His poetry has for the most part a heroic tone and vigor, as of a knight errant. But again there seems to have been somewhat unkindly in his education, as if he had by no means grown up to be the man he promised. He was apparently too genial and loyal a soul, or rather he was incapable of resisting temptation from that quarter. If to his genius and culture he could have added the temperament of Fox or Cromwell, the world would have had cause longer to remember him. . . . One would have said it was by some lucky fate that he and Shakespeare flourished at the same time in England, and yet what do we know of their acquaintanceship?

Jan. 5, 1852. To-day the trees are white with snow, — I mean their stems and branches, —

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and have the true wintry look on the storm side. Not till this has winter come to the forest. It looks like the small frost-work in the path and on the windows now, especially the oak woods at a distance, and you see better the form which the branches take. That is a picture of winter; and now you may put a cottage under the trees and roof it with snow-drifts, and let the smoke curl up amid the boughs in the morning.

It was a dark day, the heavens shut out with dense snow clouds, and the trees wetting me with the melting snow, when going through Brown's wood on Fair Haven, which they are cutting off, and suddenly looking between the stems of the trees, I thought I saw an extensive fire in the western horizon. It was a bright, coppery yellow fair weather cloud along the edge of the horizon, gold with some alloy of copper, in such contrast with the remaining clouds as to suggest nothing less than fire. On that side, the clouds which covered our day, low in the horizon, with a dim and smoke-like edge, were rolled up like a curtain with heavy folds, revealing this further bright curtain beyond.

Jan. 5, 1854. . . . This afternoon, as probably yesterday, it being warm and thawing, though fair, the snow is covered with snow fleas. Especially they are sprinkled like pepper for half a mile in the tracks of a wood-chopper in

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deep snow. With the first thawing weather they come. — There is also some blueness now in the snow, the heavens being toward night overcast. The blueness is more distinct after sunset.

Jan. 5, 1855. [Worcester.] A. M. Walked to southerly end of Quinsigamond Pond *via* Quinsigamond Village, and returned by floating bridge. Saw the straw-built wigwam of an Indian from St. Louis (Rapids?), Canada, apparently a half-breed. Not being able to buy straw, he had made it chiefly of dry grass which he had cut in a meadow with his knife. It was against a bank, and partly of earth all round. The straw or grass laid on horizontal poles, and kept down by similar ones outside, like our thatching. Makes them of straw often in Canada, can make one, if he has the straw, in one day. The door, on hinges, was of straw also, put on perpendicularly, pointed at top to fit the roof. The roof steep, six or eight inches thick. He was making baskets, wholly of sugar maple; could find no black ash. Sewed or bound the edge with maple also. Did not look up once while we were there. There was a fire-place of stone running out on one side, and covered with earth. It was the nest of a large meadow mouse. Had he ever hunted moose? When he was down at Green Island. Where was that?

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Oh, far down, very far; caught seals there. No books down that way. . . .

R. W. E. told of Mr. Hill, his classmate, of Bangor, who was much interested in my "Walden," but relished it merely as a capital satire and joke, and even thought that the survey and map of the pond were not real, but a caricature of the Coast Survey.

Jan. 5, 1856. . . . The thin snow now driving from the north and lodging on my coat consists of those beautiful star crystals, not cottony and chubby spokes as on the 13th of December, but thin and partly transparent crystals. They are about one tenth of an inch in diameter, perfect little wheels with six spokes, without a tire, or rather with six perfect little leaflets, fern-like, with a distinct, straight, slender, midrib, raying from the centre. On each side of each midrib there is a transparent, thin blade with a crenate edge. How full of the creative genius is the air in which these are generated! I should hardly admire more, if real stars fell and lodged on my coat. Nature is full of genius, full of the divinity, so that not a snow-flake escapes its fashioning hand. Nothing is cheap and coarse, neither dew-drops nor snow-flakes. Soon the storm increases (it was already very severe to face), and the snow comes finer, more white and powdery. — Who knows but this is the original form of

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all snow-flakes, but that, when I observe these crystal stars falling around me, they are only just generated in the low mist next the earth. I am nearer to the source of the snow, its primal, auroral, and golden hour or infancy; commonly the flakes reach us travel-worn and agglomerated, comparatively without order or beauty, far down in their fall, like men in their advanced age. As for the circumstances under which this phenomenon occurs, it is quite cold, and the driving storm is bitter to face, though very little snow is falling. It comes almost horizontally from the north. . . . A divinity must have stirred within them, before the crystals did thus shoot and set. Wheels of the storm chariots. The same law that shapes the earth and the stars shapes the snow-flake. Call it rather snow star. As surely as the petals of a flower are numbered, each of these countless snow stars comes whirling to earth, pronouncing thus with emphasis the number six, order, κοσμος. This was the beginning of a storm which reached far and wide, and elsewhere was more severe than here. On the Saskatchewan, where no man of science is present to behold, still down they come, and not the less fulfill their destiny, perchance melt at once on the Indian's face. What a world we live in, where myriads of these little disks, so beautiful to the most prying eye, are whirled

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down on every traveler's coat, the observant and the unobservant, on the restless squirrel's fur, on the far-stretching fields and forests, the wooded dells and the mountain tops. Far, far away from the haunts of man, they roll down some little slope, fall over and come to their bearings, and melt or lose their beauty in the mass, ready anon to swell some little rill with their contribution, and so, at last, the universal ocean from which they came. There they lie, like the wreck of chariot wheels after a battle in the skies. Meanwhile the meadow mouse shoves them aside in his gallery, the school-boy casts them in his snow-ball, or the woodman's sled glides smoothly over them, these glorious spangles, the sweepings of heaven's floor. And they all sing, melting as they sing, of the mysteries of the number six; six, six, six. He takes up the waters of the sea in his hand, leaving the salt; he disperses it in mist through the skies; he re-collects and sprinkles it like grain in six-rayed snowy stars over the earth, there to lie till he dissolves its bonds again.

Jan. 5, 1859. As I go over the causeway near the railroad bridge, I hear a fine, busy twitter, and looking up, see a nuthatch hopping along and about a swamp white oak branch, inspecting every side of it, as readily hanging head downwards as standing upright, and then

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it utters a distinct *quah*, as if to attract a companion. Indeed, that other finer twitter seemed designed to keep some companion in tow, or else it was like a very busy man talking to himself. The companion was a single chickadee, which lisped six or eight feet off. There were perhaps no other birds than these within a quarter of a mile. When the nuthatch flitted to another tree two rods off, the chickadee unfailingly followed.

Jan. 5, 1860. . . . A man receives only what he is ready to receive, whether physically, or intellectually, or morally, as animals conceive their kind at certain seasons only. We hear and apprehend only what we already half know. If there is something which does not concern me, which is out of my line, which by experience or by genius my attention is not drawn to, however novel and remarkable it may be, if it is spoken, I hear it not, if it is written, I read it not, or if I read it, it does not detain me. Every man thus *tracks himself* through life, in all his hearing and reading and observation and traveling. His observations make a chain. The phenomenon or fact that cannot in any wise be linked with the rest which he has observed, he does not observe. By and by we may be ready to receive what we cannot receive now. I find, for example, in Aristotle something about the

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spawning, etc., of the pout and perch, because I know something about it already, and have my attention aroused, but I do not discover till very late that he has made other equally important observations on the spawning of other fishes, because I am not interested in those fishes.

Jan. 6, 1838. As a child looks forward to the coming of the summer, so could we contemplate with quiet joy the circle of the seasons returning without fail eternally. As the spring came round during so many years of the gods, we could go out to admire and adorn anew our Eden, and yet never tire.

Jan. 6, 1841. We are apt to imagine that this hubbub of Philosophy, Literature, and Religion, which is heard in pulpits, lyceums, and parlors, vibrates through the universe, and is as catholic a sound as the creaking of the earth's axle. But if a man sleeps soundly, he will forget it all between sunset and dawn. It is the three-inch swing of some pendulum in a cupboard, which the great pulse of Nature vibrates clearly through each instant. When we lift our lids and open our ears, it disappears with smoke and rattle, like the cars on the railroad.

Jan. 6, 1857. . . . A man asked me the other night whether such and such persons were not as happy as anybody, being conscious, as I

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perceived, of much unhappiness himself and not aspiring to much more than an animal content. Why, said I, speaking to his condition, the stones are happy, Concord River is happy, and I am happy too. When I took up a fragment of a walnut shell this morning, I saw by its grain and composition, its form and color, etc., that it was made for happiness. The most brutish and inanimate objects that are made suggest an everlasting and thorough satisfaction. They are the homes of content. Wood, earth, mould, etc., exist for joy. Do you think that Concord River would have continued to flow these millions of years by Clamshell Hill, and round Hunt's Island, if it had not been happy, if it had been miserable in its channel, tired of existence, and cursing its maker and the hour when it sprang.

Jan. 6, 1858. . . . I derive a certain excitement not to be refused even from going through Dennis's swamp on the opposite side of the railroad, where the poison dogwood abounds. This simple-stemmed bush is very full of fruit, hanging in loose, dry, pale green, drooping panicles. Some of them are a foot long. It impresses me as the most fruitful shrub thereabouts. I cannot refrain from plucking it, and bringing home some fruitful sprigs. Other fruits are there which belong to the hard season,

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the enduring panicled andromeda, and a few partly decayed prinos berries. I walk amid the bare midribs of cinnamon ferns, with at most a terminal leafet, and here and there I see a little dark water at the bottom of a dimple in the snow over which the snow has not yet been able to prevail. — I was feeling very cheap, nevertheless, reduced to make the most of dry dogwood berries. Very little evidence of God or man did I see just then, and life was not as rich and inviting an enterprise as it should be, when my attention was caught by a snow-flake on my coat sleeve. It was one of those perfect, crystalline, star-shaped ones, six rayed, like a flat wheel with six spokes, only the spokes were perfect little pine trees in shape, arranged around a central spangle. This little object which, with many of its fellows, rested unmelting on my coat, so perfect and beautiful, reminded me that virtue had not lost her pristine vigor yet, and why should man lose heart? Sometimes the pines were worn, and had lost their branches, and again it appeared as if several stars had impinged on one another at various angles, making a somewhat spherical mass. . . . There were mingled with these starry flakes small downy pellets also. . . . We are rained and snowed on with gems. I confess that I was a little encouraged, for I was beginning to believe that

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Nature was poor and mean, and I was now convinced that she turned off as good work as ever. What a world we live in! Where are the jewelers' shops? There is nothing handsomer than a snow-flake and a dew-drop. I may say that the maker of the world exhausts his skill with each snow-flake and dew-drop that he sends down. We think that the one mechanically coheres, and that the other simply flows together and falls, but in truth they are the product of *enthusiasm*, the children of an ecstasy, finished with the artist's utmost skill.

Jan. 6, 1859. P. M. To Martial Miles's. . . . Miles had hanging in his barn a little owl, *Strix Acadica*, which he caught alive with his hands about a week ago. He had forced it to eat, but it died. It was a funny little brown bird, spotted with white, seven and one half inches long to the end of the tail, or eight to the end of the claws, and nineteen in alar extent, not so long by considerable as a robin, though much stouter. This one had three (not two, and Nuttall says three) white bars on its tail, but no noticeable white at the tip. Its cunning feet were feathered quite to the extremity of the toes, looking like whitish (or tawny white) mice, or as when one pulls stockings over his boots. As usual, the white spots on the upper sides of the wings are smaller and a more distinct white, while those

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beneath are much larger, but a subdued, satiny white. Even a bird's wing has an upper and an under side, and the last admits only of more subdued and tender colors.

Jan. 7, 1851. . . . The knowledge of an unlearned man is living and luxuriant like a forest, but covered with mosses and lichens, and for the most part inaccessible and going to waste; the knowledge of the man of science is like timber collected in yards for public works, which still supports a green sprout here and there, but even this is liable to dry rot.

I felt my spirits rise when I had got out of the road into the open fields, and the sky had a new appearance. I stepped along more buoyantly. There was a warm sunset in the wooded valleys, a yellowish tinge on the pines. Reddish dun-colored clouds, like dusky flames, stood over it, and then streaks of blue sky were seen here and there. The life, the joy that is in blue sky after a storm. There is no account of the blue sky in history. Before, I walked in the ruts of travel, now I adventured. . . .

If I have any conversation with a scamp in my walk, my afternoon is wont to be spoiled.

Jan. 7, 1852. . . . Now . . . I see the sun descending into the west. There is something new, a *snow* bow in the east, on the snow clouds, merely a *white* bow, hardly any color distin-

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guishable. But in the west what inconceivable crystalline purity of blue sky, . . . and I see feathery clouds on this ground, some traveling north, others directly in the opposite direction, though apparently close together. Some of these cloudlets are waifs and droppings from rainbows, clear rainbow through and through, spun out of the fibre of the rainbow, or rather as if the children of the west had been pulling rainbow (instead of tow), that had done service, old junk of rainbow, and cast it into flocks. And then such fantastic, feathery scrawls of gauze-like vapor on this elysian ground! We never tire of the drama of sunset. I go forth each afternoon and look into the west a quarter of an hour before sunset with fresh curiosity to see what new picture will be painted there, what new phenomenon exhibited, what new dissolving views. . . . Every day a new picture is painted and framed, held up for half an hour in such lights as the great artist chooses, and then withdrawn and the curtain falls. The sun goes down, long the after-glow gives light, the damask curtains glow along the western window, the first star is lit, and I go home.

Jan. 7, 1853. To Nawshawtuck. This is one of those pleasant winter mornings when you find the river firmly frozen in the night, but still the air is serene and the sun feels gratefully

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warm an hour after sunrise. Though so fair, . . . a whitish vapor fills the lower stratum of the air concealing the mountains. The smokes go up from the village, you hear the cocks with immortal vigor, the children shout on their way to school, and the sound made by the railroad men hammering a rail is uncommonly musical. This promises a perfect winter day. In the heavens, except the altitude of the sun, you have, as it were, the conditions of summer, perfect serenity and clarity, and sonorousness in the earth. All nature is but braced by the cold. It gives tension to both body and mind. . . .

About ten minutes before 10 A. M. I heard a very loud sound, and felt a violent jar which made the house rock and the loose articles on my table rattle. I knew it must be either a powder mill blown up or an earthquake. Not knowing but another and more violent shock might take place, I immediately ran down-stairs. I saw from the door a vast expanding column of whitish smoke rising in the west directly over the powder mills four miles distant. It was unfolding its volumes above, which made it wider there. In three or four minutes it had all risen and spread itself into a lengthening, somewhat copper-colored cloud, parallel with the horizon from N. to S., and in about ten minutes after the explosion, it passed over my head,

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being several miles long from N. to S., and distinctly dark and smoky toward the N., not nearly so high as the few cirrhi in the sky. Jumped into a man's wagon and rode toward the mills. In a few minutes more, I saw behind me, far in the E., a faint, salmon-colored cloud carrying the news of the explosion to the sea, and perchance over the head of the absent proprietor. Arrived probably before half-past ten. There were perhaps thirty or forty wagons there. The kernel mill had blown up first, and killed three men who were in it, said to be turning a roller with a chisel. In three seconds after, one of the mixing houses exploded. The kernel house was swept away, and fragments, mostly but a foot or two in length, were strewn over the hills and meadows for thirty rods. The slight snow on the ground was for the most part melted around. The mixing house about ten rods W. was not so completely dispersed, for most of the machinery remained a total wreck. The press house about twelve rods E. had two thirds of its boards off, and a mixing house next westward from that which blew up had lost some boards on the E. side. The boards fell out (*i. e.*, of those buildings which did not blow up), the air within apparently rushing out to fill up the vacuum occasioned by the explosions. So the powder

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being bared to the fiery particles in the air, the building explodes. The powder on the floor of the bared press house was six inches deep in some places, and the crowd were thoughtlessly going into it. A few windows were broken thirty or forty rods off. Timber six inches square and eighteen feet long was thrown a dozen rods over a hill eighty feet high at least. Thirty rods was about the limit of fragments. The drying house, in which was a fire, was perhaps twenty-five rods distant and escaped. . . . Some of the clothes of the men were in the tops of the trees where undoubtedly their bodies had been and left them. . . . Put the different buildings thirty rods apart, and then but one will blow up at a time.

Jan. 7, 1854. P. M. To Ministerial Swamp. . . . I went to these woods partly to hear an owl, but did not. Now that I have left them nearly a mile behind, I hear one distinctly, *hoorer hoo.* Strange that we should hear this sound so often, yet so rarely see the bird, oftenest at twilight. It has a singular prominence as a sound. . . . It is a sound which the wood or the horizon makes.

Jan. 7, 1855. . . . Cloudy and misty. On opening the door I feel a very warm southwesterly wind contrasting with the cooler air of the house, and find it unexpectedly wet in the street.

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It is in fact a January thaw. The channel of the river is quite open in many places, and in others I remark that the ice and water alternate like waves and the hollow between them. There are long reaches of open water where I look for muskrats and ducks as I go along to Clamshell Hill. I hear the pleasant sound of running water. . . . The delicious, soft, spring-suggesting air, how it fills my veins with life. Life becomes again credible to me. A certain dormant life awakes in me, and I begin to love nature again. Here is my Italy, my heaven, my New England. I understand why the Indians hereabouts placed heaven in the S. W. The soft south. On the slopes, the ground is laid bare, and radical leaves revealed, crowfoot, shepherd's purse, clover, etc., a fresh green, and, in the meadow, the skunk-cabbage buds with a bluish bloom, and the red leaves of the meadow saxifrage. These and the many withered plants laid bare remind me of spring and of botany. — On the same bare sand is revealed a new crop of arrow heads. I pick up two perfect ones of quartz, sharp as if just from the hand of the maker. Still, birds are very rare. Here comes a little flock of titmice plainly to keep me company, with their black caps and throats making them look top-heavy, restlessly hopping along the alders with a sharp, clear, lisping note.

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. . . The bank is tinged with a most delicate pink or bright flesh color where the *Beomyces roseus* grows. It is a lichen day. . . . The sky seen here and there through the wrack, bluish and greenish, and perchance with a vein of red in the W., seems like the inside of a shell, deserted of its tenant, into which I have crawled. The willow catkins began to peep from under their scales as early as the 26th of last month. Many buds have lost their scales.

Jan. 7, 1857. P. M. To Walden. . . . It is bitter cold, with a cutting N. W. wind. The pond is now a plain snow field, but there are no tracks of fishers on it. It is too cold for them. . . . All animate things are reduced to their lowest terms. This is the fifth day of cold, blowing weather. All tracks are concealed in an hour or two. Some have to make their paths two or three times a day. The fisherman is not here, for his lines would freeze in. I go through the woods toward the cliffs along the side of the Well Meadow field. There is nothing so sanative, so poetic, as a walk in the woods and fields even now, when I meet none abroad for pleasure. Nothing so inspires me, and excites such serene and profitable thought. The objects are elevating. In the street and in society I am almost invariably cheap and dissipated, my life

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is unspeakably mean. No amount of gold or respectability could in the least redeem it, dining with the governor or a member of Congress!! But alone in distant woods or fields, in unpretending sproutlands or pastures tracked by rabbits, even in a bleak and, to most, cheerless day like this, when a villager would be thinking of his inn, I come to myself, I once more feel myself grandly related. This cold and solitude are friends of mine. I suppose that this value, in my case, is equivalent to what others get by church-going and prayer. I come to my solitary woodland walk as the homesick go home. I thus dispose of the superfluous, and see things as they are, grand and beautiful. I have told many that I walk every day about half the daylight, but I think they do not believe it. I wish to get the Concord, the Massachusetts, the America, out of my head and be sane a part of every day. I wish to forget a considerable part of every day, all mean, narrow, trivial men (and this requires usually to forego and forget all personal relations so long), and therefore I come out to these solitudes where the problem of existence is simplified. I get away a mile or two from the town, into the stillness and solitude of nature, with rocks, trees, weeds, snow about me. I enter some glade in the woods, perchance, where a few weeds and dry leaves alone lift

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themselves above the surface of the snow, and it is as if I had come to an open window. I see out and around myself. Our sky-lights are thus far away from the ordinary resorts of men. I am not satisfied with ordinary windows. I must have a true sky-light, and that is outside the village. I am not thus expanded, recreated, enlightened when I meet a company of men. It chances that the sociable, the town and country club, the farmers' club does not prove a sky-light to me. . . . The man I meet with is not often so instructive as the silence he breaks. This stillness, solitude, wildness of nature is a kind of thoroughwort or boneset to my intellect. This is what I go out to seek. It is as if I always met in those places some grand, serene, immortal, infinitely encouraging, though invisible companion, and walked with him. There at last my nerves are steadied, my senses and my mind do their office. I am aware that most of my neighbors would think it a hardship to be compelled to linger here one hour, especially this bleak day, and yet I receive this sweet and ineffable compensation for it. It is the most agreeable thing I do. I love and celebrate nature even in detail, because I love the scenery of these interviews and translations. I love to remember every creature that was at this club. I thus get off a certain social scurf. . . . I do not consider

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the other animals brutes in the common sense. I am attracted toward them undoubtedly because I never heard any nonsense from them. I have not convicted them of folly, or vanity, or pomposity, or stupidity in dealing with me. Their vices, at any rate, do not interfere with me. My fairies invariably take to flight when a man appears upon the scene. In a caucus, a meeting-house, a lyceum, a club-room there is nothing like this fine experience for me. But away out of the town, on Brown's scrub oak lot, which was sold the other day for six dollars an acre, I have company such as England cannot buy nor afford. This society is what I live, what I survey for. I subscribe generously to *this* all that I have and am. There in that Well Meadow field, perhaps, I feel in my element again, as when a fish is put back into the water. I wash off all my chagrins. All things go smoothly as the axle of the universe.

I can remember that when I was very young I used to have a dream night after night, over and over again, which might have been named Rough and Smooth. All existence, all satisfaction and dissatisfaction, all event, was symbolized in this way. Now I seemed to be lying and tossing, perchance, on a horrible, a fatal rough surface, which must soon indeed put an end to my existence (though even in my dream I knew it

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to be the symbol merely of my misery), and then again, suddenly, I was lying on a delicious smooth surface, as of a summer sea, as of gossamer or down, or softest plush, and it was a luxury to live. My waking experience always has been and is an alternate Rough and Smooth. In other words it is Insanity and Sanity.

Might I aspire to praise the moderate nymph Nature, I must be like her, moderate.

Jan. 7, 1858. The storm is over, and it is one of those beautiful winter mornings when a vapor is seen hanging in the air between the village and the woods. Though the snow is only six inches deep, the yards appear full of those beautiful crystals, star or wheel shaped flakes, as a measure is full of grain. . . . By ten o'clock I notice a very long, level stratum of cloud not very high in the S. E. sky (all the rest being clear), which I suspect to be the vapor from the sea. This lasts for several hours.

These are true mornings of creation, original and poetic days, not mere repetitions of the past. There is no lingering of yesterday's fogs, only such a mist as might have adorned the first morning.

P. M. I see some tree sparrows feeding on the fine grass seed above the snow. They are flitting along one at a time, commonly sunk in the snow, uttering occasionally a low, sweet war-

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ble, and seemingly as happy there, and with this wintry prospect before them for the night and several months to come, as any man by his fireside. One occasionally hops or flies toward another, and the latter suddenly jerks away from him. They are searching or hopping up to the fine grass, or oftener picking the seeds from the snow. At length the whole ten have collected within a space a dozen feet square, but soon after, being alarmed, they utter a different and less musical chirp, and flit away into an apple-tree.

Jan. 8, 1842. When, as now, in January a south wind melts the snow, and the bare ground appears covered with sere grass and occasionally wilted green leaves, which seem in doubt whether to let go their greenness quite or absorb new juices against the coming year, in such a season a perfume seems to exhale from the earth itself, and the south wind melts my integuments also. Then is she my mother earth. I derive a real vigor from the scent of the gale wafted over the naked ground, as from strong meats, and realize again how man is the pensioner of nature. We are always conciliated and cheered when we are fed by an influence, and our needs are felt to be part of the domestic economy of nature.

What offends me most in my compositions is the moral element in them. The repentant say never a brave word. Their resolves should be

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mumbled in silence. Strictly speaking, morality is not healthy. The undeserved joys which come uncalled, and make us more pleased than grateful, are they that sing.

In the steadiness and equanimity of music lies its divinity. It is the only assured tone. When men attain to speak with as settled a faith, and as firm assurance, their voices will ring and their feet march as do the feet of a soldier. The very dogs howl if time is disregarded. Because of the perfect time of this music-box, its harmony with itself, is its greater dignity and stateliness. This music is more nobly related for its more exact measure. So simple a difference as this more even pace raises it to the higher dignity. . . . What are ears, what is time, that this particular series of sounds called a strain of music can be wafted down through the centuries from Homer to me, and Homer have been conversant with that same wandering and mysterious charm which never had a local habitation in space. . . . I feel a sad cheer when I hear these lofty strains, because there must be something in me as lofty that hears. Ah, I hear them but rarely. . . . They tell me the secrets of futurity. Where are its secrets wound up but in this box? So much hope had slumbered. — There are in music such strains as far surpass any faith which man ever

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had in the loftiness of his destiny. He must be very sad before he can comprehend them. The clear liquid notes from the morning fields beyond seem to come through a vale of sadness to man which gives to all music a plaintive air. The sadness is in the echo which our lives make and which alone we hear. Music hath caught a higher pace than any virtue that I know. It is the arch reformer. It hastens the sun to his setting. It invites him to his rising. It is the sweetest reproach, a measured satire. I know there is somewhere a people where this heroism has place. Things are to be learned which it will be sweet to learn. This cannot be all rumor. When I hear this, I think of that everlasting something which is not mere sound, but is to be a thrilling reality, and I can consent to go about the meanest work for as many years of time as it pleases the Hindoo penance, for a year of the gods were as nothing to that which shall come after. What, then, can I do to hasten that other time, or that space where there shall be no time, and where these things shall be a more living part of my life, where there will be no discords in my life?

Jan. 8, 1851. . . . The light of the setting sun falling on the snow banks to-day made them glow almost yellow. — The hills seen from Fair Haven Pond make a wholly new landscape.

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Covered with snow and yellowish green or brown pines, and shrub oaks, they look higher and more massive. Their white mantle relates them to the clouds in the horizon and to the sky. Perchance what is light-colored looks loftier than what is dark.

Jan. 8, 1852. . . . Even as early as 3 o'clock these winter afternoons the axes in the woods sound like night-fall, as if it were the sound of a twilight labor.

Reading from my MSS. to Miss Emerson this evening and using the word god, in one instance, in perchance a merely heathenish sense, she inquired hastily in a tone of dignified anxiety, "Is that god spelt with a little g?" Fortunately it was. (I had brought in the word god without any solemnity of voice or connection.) So I went on as if nothing had happened.

Jan. 8, 1854. . . . Stood within a rod of a downy woodpecker on an apple-tree. How curious and exciting the blood-red spot on its hind head! I ask why it is there, but no answer is rendered by these snow-clad fields. It is so close to the bark I do not see its feet. It looks behind as it had a black cassock open behind and showing a white under-garment between the shoulders and down the back. It is briskly and incessantly tapping all round the dead limbs, but hardly twice in a place, as if to

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sound the tree, and so see if it has any worm in it, or perchance to start them. How much he deals with the bark of trees, all his life long tapping and inspecting it. He it is that scatters these fragments of bark and lichens about on the snow at the base of trees. What a lichenest he must be! or rather perhaps it is fungi make his favorite study, for he deals most with dead limbs. How briskly he glides up or drops himself down a limb, creeping round and round, and hopping from limb to limb, and now flitting with a rippling sound of his wings to another tree.

Jan. 8, 1857. . . . I picked up on the bare ice of the river . . . a furry caterpillar, black at the two ends and red-brown in the middle, rolled into a ball or close ring, like a woodchuck. I pressed it hard between my fingers and found it frozen, put it into my hat, and when I took it out in the evening, it soon began to stir, and at length crawled about, though a portion of it seemed not quite flexible. It took some time for it to thaw. This is the fifth cold day, and it must have been frozen so long.

Jan. 8, 1860. . . . To-day it is very warm and pleasant. 2 P. M. Walk to Walden. . . . After December all weather that is not wintry is spring-like. How changed are our feelings and thoughts by this more genial sky! When I get to the railroad, I listen from time to time to

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hear some sound out of the distance which will express the mood of nature. The cock and the hen, that pheasant which we have domesticated, are perhaps the most sensitive among domestic animals to atmospheric changes. You cannot listen a moment such a day as this, but you will hear from far or near the clarion of the cock celebrating this new season, yielding to the influence of the south wind, or the drawling note of the hen dreaming of eggs that are to be. These are the sounds that fill the air, and no hum of insects. They are affected like voyagers approaching the land. We discover a new world every time we see the earth again, after it has been covered for a season with snow.

Jan. 8, 1861. . . . The Indians taught us not only the use of corn and how to plant it, but also of whortleberries and how to dry them for winter, and made us baskets to put them in. We should have hesitated long to eat some kinds of berries, if they had not set us the example, having learned by long experience that they were not only harmless, but salutary. I have added a few to my number of edible ones by walking behind an Indian in Maine who ate such as I never thought of eating before. Of course they made a much greater account of wild fruits than we do. What we call huckleberry cake made of Indian meal and huckleberries was

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evidently the principal cake of the aborigines, and was generally known and used by them all over this part of North America, as much as or more than plum cake by us. They enjoyed it ages before our ancestors heard of Indian meal or huckleberries. If you had traveled here one thousand years ago, it would probably have been offered you alike on the Connecticut, the Potomac, the Niagara, the Ottawa, and the Mississippi. It appears . . . that the Indian used the dried berries commonly in the form of huckleberry cake, and also of huckleberry porridge or pudding. We have no national cake so universal and well known as this was in all parts of the country where corn and huckleberries grew.

Jan. 9, 1841. Each hearty stroke we deal with these outward hands slays an inward foe.

Jan. 9, 1842. One cannot too soon forget his errors and misdemeanors. To dwell long upon them is to add to the offense. Repentance and sorrow can only be displaced by something better, which is as free and original as if they had not been. Not to grieve long for any action, but to go immediately and do freshly and otherwise, subtracts so much from the wrong; else we may make the delay of repentance the punishment of the sin. A great soul will not consider its sins as its own, but be more absorbed in the prospect of

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that valor and virtue for the future which is more properly itself, than in these improper actions which by being sins discover themselves to be not itself.

Sir Walter Raleigh's faults are those of a courtier and a soldier. In his counsels and aphorisms we see not unfrequently the haste and rashness of a boy. His philosophy was not wide nor deep, but continually giving way to the generosity of his nature. What he touches he adorns by his greater humanity and native nobleness, but he touches not the true and original. . . . He seems to have been fitted by his genius for short flights of impulsive poetry, but not for the sustained loftiness of Shakespeare or Milton. He was not wise nor a seer in any sense, but rather one of nature's nobility, the most generous nature which can be spared to linger in the purlieus of the court. — His was a singularly perverted genius, with a great inclination to originality and freedom, and yet who never steered his own course. Of so fair and susceptible a nature, rather than broad or deep, that he lingered to slake his thirst at the nearest and even somewhat turbid wells of truth and beauty. His homage to the less fair or noble left no space for homage to the all fair. The misfortune of his circumstances or rather of the man appears in the fact that he was the

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author of "Maxims of State," "The Cabinet Council," and "The Soul's Errand."

Jan. 9, 1852. . . . Where a path has been shoveled through drifts in the road, I see . . . little heavens in the crannies and crevices. The deeper they are, and the larger masses they are surrounded by, the darker blue they are. Some are a very light blue with a tinge of green. Methinks I oftenest see this when it is snowing. At any rate, the atmosphere must be in a peculiar state. Apparently the snow absorbs the other rays, and reflects the blue. It has strained the air, and only the blue rays have passed through the sieve. . . . Into every track which the teamster makes this elysian, empyrean atmosphere rushes.

Jan. 9, 1853. 3 P. M. To Walden and Cliffs. The telegraph harp again. Always the same unrememberable revelation it is to me. I never hear it without thinking of Greece. How the Greeks harped upon the words, immortal, ambrosial. They are what it says. It stings my ear with everlasting truth. It allies Concord to Athens, and both to Elysium. It always . . . makes me sane, reverses my views of things. I get down the railroad till I hear that which makes all the world a lie. When the . . . west wind sweeps this wire, I rise to the height of my being. . . . This wire is my

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redeemer. It always brings a special and a general message to me from the highest. Day before yesterday I looked at the mangled and blackened bodies of men which had been blown up by powder, and felt that the lives of men are not innocent, and that there was an avenging power in nature. To-day I hear this immortal melody while the west wind is blowing balmily on my cheek and a roseate sunset seems to be preparing. . . .

As I climbed the cliff, I paused in the sun and sat on a dry rock, dreaming. I thought of those summery hours, when time is tinged with eternity, runs into it, and becomes of one stuff with it, how much, how perhaps all that is best in our experience in middle life, may be resolved into the memory of our youth! Pulling up the Johnswort on the face of the cliff, I am surprised to see the signs of unceasing growth about the roots, fresh shoots two inches long, white with red leafets, and all the radical part quite green. The leaves of the crowfoot also are quite green, and carry me forward to spring. I dig one up with a stick, and pulling it to pieces, I find deep in the centre of the plant, just beneath the ground, surrounded by all the tender leaves that are to precede it, the blossom bud about half as big as the head of a pin, perfectly white. (?) (I open one next day, and it is

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yellow.) There it patiently sits and slumbers, how full of faith, informed of a spring which the world has never seen, the promise and prophecy of it, shaped somewhat like some Eastern temples in which a bud-shaped dome o'ertops the whole. It affected me this tender dome-like bud within the bosom of the earth, like a temple upon its surface resounding with the worship of votaries. Methought I saw the priests with yellow robes within it. . . . It will go forth in April, this vestal, now cherishing here her fire, to be married to the sun. How innocent are nature's purposes! How unambitious!

I saw to-day the reflected sunset sky in the river, but the colors in the reflection were different from those in the sky. In the latter were dark clouds with coppery or dun-colored undersides; in the water were dun-colored clouds with bluish-green patches or bars.

Jan. 9, 1855. What a strong and hearty, but reckless, hit-or-miss style had some of the early writers of New England, like Josselyn and William Wood, and others elsewhere in those days; as if they spoke with a relish, smacking their lips like a coach whip, caring more to speak heartily than scientifically true. They are not to be caught napping by the wonders of nature in a new country, and perhaps are often more ready to appreciate them than she is to

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exhibit them. They give you one piece of nature at any rate, and that is themselves. . . . The strong new soil speaks through them. I have just been reading somewhat in Wood's "New England's Prospect." He speaks a good word for New England, indeed will come very near lying for her, and when he doubts the justness of his praise, he brings it out not the less roundly; as who cares if it is not so, we love her not the less for all that. Certainly that generation stood nearer to nature, nearer to the facts than this, and hence their books have more life in them.

Jan. 9, 1858. Snows again. . . . The snow is very moist, with large flakes. Looking toward Trillium wood, the nearer flakes appear to move quite swiftly, often making the impression of a continuous white line. They are also seen to move directly, and nearly horizontally. But the more distant flakes appear to loiter in the air, as if uncertain how they will approach the earth, or even to cross the course of the former, and are always seen as simple and distinct flakes. I think that this difference is simply owing to the fact that the former pass quickly over the field of view, while the latter are much longer in it.

Jan. 9, 1860. . . . I hear that ——, a rich old farmer, who lives in a large house, with a

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male housekeeper, and no other family, gets up at three or four o'clock these winter mornings, and milks seventeen cows regularly. When asked why he works so hard, he answers that the poor are obliged to work hard. Only think what a creature of fate he is, this old Jotun, milking his seventeen cows, though the thermometer goes down to — 25°, and not knowing why he does it. . . . Think how helpless, a rich man who can only do as he has done and as his neighbors do, one or all of them. What an account he will have to give of himself! He spent some time in a world, alternately cold and warm, and every winter morning with lantern in hand, when the first goblins were playing their tricks, he resolutely accomplished his task, milked his seventeen cows, while the man-housekeeper prepared his breakfast. . . . Think how tenaciously every man does his deed of some kind or other, though it be idleness! He is rich, dependent on nobody, and nobody is dependent on him, has as good health as the average, at least, can do as he pleases, as we say, yet he gravely rises every morning by candle-light, dons his cowhide boots and his frock, takes his lantern, and wends his way to the barn and milks his seventeen cows, milking with one hand, while he warms the other against the cow or his person. This is but the beginning of his

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day, and his Augean stable work, so serious is the life he lives.

Jan. 10, 1856. The weather has considerably moderated, — 2° at breakfast time. It was — 8° at seven last evening, but this has been the coldest night probably. You lie with your feet or legs curled up, waiting for the morning, the sheets shining with frost about your mouth. Water left by the stove is frozen thick, and what you sprinkle in bathing falls on the floor, ice. The house plants are all frozen, and soon droop and turn black. I look out on the roof of a cottage covered a foot deep with snow, wondering how the poor children in its garret, with their few rags, contrive to keep their toes warm. I mark the white smoke from its chimney whose contracted wreaths are soon dissipated in this stinging air, and think of the size of their wood pile. And again I try to realize how they panted for a breath of cool air those sultry nights last summer. Recall, realize now, if you can, the hum of the mosquito.

It seems that the snow-storm of Saturday night was a remarkable one, reaching many hundred miles along the coast. It is said that some thousands passed the night in the cars. — The kitchen windows were magnificent last night with their frost sheaves, surpassing any cut or ground glass.

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I love to wade and flounder through the swamp now, these bitter cold days, when the snow lies deep on the ground, and I need travel but little way from the town to get to a Nova Zembla solitude, to wade through the swamps, all snowed up, untracked by man, into which the fine dry snow is still drifting till it is even with the tops of the water andromeda, and half way up the high blueberry bushes. I penetrate to islets inaccessible in summer, my feet slumping to the sphagnum far out of sight beneath, where the alderberry glows yet, . . . and perchance a single tree sparrow lisps by my side; where there are few tracks even of wild animals. Perhaps only a mouse or two have burrowed up by the side of some twig, and hopped away in straight lines on the surface of the light, deep snow, as if too timid to delay, to another hole by the side of another bush, and a few rabbits have run in a path amid the blueberries and alders about the edge of the swamp. This is instead of a Polar Expedition, and going after Franklin. There is but little life and the objects are few, it is true. We are reduced to admire buds, even like the partridges, and bark, like the rabbits and mice, the great red and forward looking buds of the azalea, the plump red ones of the blueberry, and the fine, sharp red ones of the panicled andromeda sleeping along

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its stem, the speckled black alder, the rapid growing dogwood, the pale brown and cracked blueberry, etc. Even a little shining bud which lies sleeping behind its twig, perhaps half concealed by ice, is object enough. I feel myself upborne on the andromeda bushes beneath the snow as on a springy basket-work. Then down I go, up to my middle in the deep but silent snow, which has no sympathy with my mishap. Beneath its level, how many sweet berries will be hanging next August! — This freezing weather I see the pumps dressed in mats and old clothes, or bundled up in straw. Fortunate he who has placed his cottage on the south side of some high hill or some dense wood, and not in the middle of the Great Fields where there is no hill nor tree to shelter it. There the winds have full sweep, and such a day as yesterday, the house is but a fence to stay the drifting snow. Such is the piercing wind, no man loiters between his house and barn. The road track is soon obliterated, and the path which leads round to the back of the house, dug this morning, is filled up again, and you can no longer see the tracks of the master of the house who only an hour ago took refuge in some half-subterranean apartment there. You know only by some white wreath of smoke from his chimney, which is at once snapped up by the hungry air, that he sits

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warming his wits there within, studying the almanac to learn how long it is before spring. But his neighbor, who, only half a mile off, has placed his house in the shelter of a wood, is digging out of a drift his pile of roots and stumps, hauled from the swamp, at which he regularly dulls his axe and saw, reducing them to billets that will fit into his stove. With comparative safety and even comfort he labors at this mine. As for the other, the windows give no sign of inhabitants, for they are frosted over as if they were ground glass, and the curtains are down beside. . . . No sound issues from within. It remains only to examine the chimney's nostrils. I look very sharp, and fancy that I see some smoke against the sky there, but this is deceptive, for as we are accustomed to walk up to an empty fire-place and imagine that we feel some heat from it, so I have convinced myself that I saw smoke issuing from the chimney of a house which had not been inhabited for twenty years. I had so vivid an idea of smoke that no painter could have matched my imagination. It was as if the spirits of the former inhabitants revisiting their old haunts were once more boiling a spiritual kettle below.

Jan. 10, 1858. The N. side of Walden is a warm walk in sunny weather. If you are sick and despairing, go forth in winter and see the

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red alder catkins dangling at the extremity of the twigs all in the wintry air, like long, hard mulberries, promising a new spring and the fulfillment of all our hopes. We prize any tenderness, any softening in the winter, catkins, birds' nests, insect life, etc. The most I get, perchance, is the sight of a mulberry-like red catkin, which I know has a dormant life in it seemingly greater than my own.

Jan. 10, 1859. . . . The alder is one of the prettiest trees and shrubs in the winter. It is evidently so full of life with its conspicuously pretty red catkins dangling from it on all sides. It seems to dread the winter less than other plants. It has a certain heyday and cheery look, less stiff than most, with more of the flexible grace of summer. With those dangling clusters of red catkins which it switches in the face of winter, it brags for all vegetation. It is not daunted by the cold, but still hangs gracefully over the frozen stream.

I come across to the road S. of the hill, to see the pink on the snow-clad hill at sunset. . . . I walk back and forth in the road waiting for its appearance. The windows on the skirts of the village reflect the setting sun with intense brilliancy, a dazzling glitter, it is so cold. Standing thus on one side of the hill, I begin to see a pink light reflected

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from the snow there about fifteen minutes before the sun sets. This gradually deepens to purple and violet in some places, and the pink is very distinct, especially when, after looking at the simply white snow on other sides, you turn your eyes to the hill. Even after all direct sunlight is withdrawn from the hill-top, as well as from the valley in which you stand, you see, if you are prepared to discern it, a faint and delicate tinge of purple and violet there. This was on a very clear and cold evening when the thermometer was —6°.

This is one of the phenomena of the winter sunset, this distinct pink light reflected from the brows of snow-clad hills on one side of you, as you are facing the sun.

The cold rapidly increases, and it is —14° in the evening. I hear the ground crack with a very loud sound and a great jar, in the evening and in the course of the night several times. It is once as loud and heavy as the explosion of the Acton powder mills.

Jan. 11, 1839.

THE THAW.

I saw the civil sun drying earth's tears,
Her tears of joy that only faster flowed.

Fain would I stretch me by the highway side
To thaw and trickle with the melting snow,
That mingled, soul and body, with the tide,
I too may through the pores of nature flow.

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Jan. 11, 1852. . . . The glory of these afternoons, though the sky may be mostly overcast, is in the ineffably clear blue, or else pale greenish-yellow patches of sky in the west just before sunset. The whole cope of heaven seen at once is never so elysian; windows to heaven, the heavenward windows of the earth. The end of the day is truly Hesperian. . . .

We sometimes find ourselves living fast, unprofitably, and coarsely even, as we catch ourselves eating our meals in unaccountable haste. But in one sense we cannot live too leisurely. Let me not live as if time was short. Catch the pace of the seasons, have leisure to attend to every phenomenon of nature, and to entertain every thought that comes to you. Let your life be a leisurely progress through the realms of nature, even in guest-quarters. . . .

The question is not where did the traveler go? What places did he see? It would be difficult to choose between places. But who was the traveler? How did he travel? How genuine an experience did he get? For traveling is, in the main, like as if you stayed at home, and then the question is, How do you live and conduct yourself at home? What I mean is that it might be hard to decide whether I would travel to Lake Superior or Labrador or Florida. Perhaps none would be worth the while if I went

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by the usual mode. But if I travel in a simple, primitive, original manner, standing in a truer relation to men and nature, travel away from the old and commonplace, get some honest experience of life, if only out of my feet and homesickness, then it becomes less important whither I go or how far. I so see the world from a new and more commanding point of view. Perhaps it is easier to live a true and natural life while traveling, as one can move about less awkwardly than he can stand still.

Jan. 11, 1857. . . . For some years past I have partially offered myself as a lecturer, have been advertised as such several years. Yet I had but two or three invitations to lecture in a year, and some years none at all. I congratulate myself on having been permitted to stay at home thus. I am so much richer for it. I do not see what I should have got of much value, except money, by going about. But I do see what I should have lost. It seems to me that I have a longer and more liberal lease of life thus. I cannot afford to be telling my experience, especially to those who perhaps will take no interest in it. I wish to be getting experience. You might as well recommend to a bear to leave his hollow tree and run about all winter scratching at all the hollow trees in the woods. He would be leaner in the spring than if he had

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stayed at home and sucked his claws. As for the lecture-goers, it is none of their business what I think. I perceive that most make a great account of their relations, more or less personal or direct, to many men, coming before them as lecturers, writers, or public men. But all this is impertinent and unprofitable to me. I never get recognized, nor was recognized by a crowd of men. I was never assured of their existence, nor they of mine.

There was wit and even poetry in the negro's answer to the man who tried to persuade him that the slaves would not be obliged to work in heaven, — "Oh, you g' way, Massa, I know better. If dere 's no work for cullered folks up dar, dey 'll *make* some fur 'em, and if dere 's nuffin better to do, dey 'll make 'em *shub de clouds along*. You can't fool dis chile, Massa."

I was describing, the other day, my success in solitary and distant woodland walking outside the town. I do not go there to get my dinner, but to get that sustenance which dinners only preserve me to enjoy, without which dinners are a vain repetition. But how little men can help me in this, only by having a kindred experience. Of what use to tell them of my happiness. Thus, if ever we have anything important to say, it might be introduced with the remark, it is nothing to you, in particular. It is none of

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your business, I know. That is what might be called going into *good society*. I never chanced to meet with any man so cheering and elevating and encouraging, so infinitely suggestive as the stillness and solitude of the Well Meadow field. Men even think me odd and perverse because I do not prefer their society to this Nymph or Wood God rather. But I have tried them. I have sat down with a dozen of them together in a club. . . .

They did not inspire me. One or another abused our ears with many words and a few thoughts which were not theirs. There was very little genuine goodness apparent. We are such hollow pretenders. I lost my time. But out there! Who shall criticise that companion? It is like the hone to the knife. I bathe in that element, and am cleansed of all social impurities. I become a witness with unprejudiced senses to the order of the universe. *There* is nothing petty or impertinent, none to say, "See what a great man I am!" *There*, chiefly, and not in the society of wits, am I cognizant of wit. Shall I prefer a part, an infinitely small fraction to the whole. There I get my underpinnings laid and repaired, cemented, leveled. There is my country club. We dine at the sign of the Shrub Oak, the new Albion House.

I demand of my companion some evidence

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that he has traveled farther than to the sources of the Nile, that he has been *out of town, out of the house*, not that he can tell a good story, but that he can keep a good silence. Has he attended to a silence more significant than any story? Did he ever get out of the road which all men and fools travel? You call yourself a great traveler, perhaps, but can you get beyond the influence of a certain class of ideas?

Jan. 11, 1859. At 6 A. M. —22°, and how much lower I know not, the mercury [?] in our thermometer having gone into the bulb, but that is said to be the lowest. Going to Boston to-day, I find that the cracking of the ground last night is the subject of conversation in the cars, and that it was quite general. I see many cracks in Cambridge and Concord. It would appear, then, that the *ground cracks on the advent of very severe cold weather.* I had not heard it before this winter. It was so when I went to Amherst a winter or two ago.

Jan. 11, 1861. Horace Mann brings me the contents of a crow's stomach in alcohol. It was killed in the village within a day or two. It is quite a mass of frozen-thawed apple pulp and skin, with a good many pieces of skunk-cabbage berries, a quarter of an inch or less in diameter, and commonly showing the pale brown or blackish outside, interspersed, looking like bits of

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acorns, never a whole or even half a berry, and two little bones as of frogs, or mice, or tadpoles. Also a street pebble, a quarter of an inch in diameter, hard to be distinguished in appearance from the cabbage seeds.

Jan. 12, 1852. . . . I sometimes think that I may go forth and walk hard and earnestly, and live a more substantial life, get a glorious experience, be much abroad in heat and cold, day and night, live more, expend more atmospheres, be weary often, etc., etc. But then swiftly the thought comes to me, Go not so far out of your way for a truer life, keep strictly onward in that path alone which your genius points out, do the things which lie nearest to you, but which are difficult to do, live a purer, a more thoughtful and laborious life, more true to your friends and neighbors, more noble and magnanimous, and that will be better than a wild walk. To live in relations of truth and sincerity with men is to dwell in a frontier country. What a wild and unfrequented wilderness that would be! What Saguenays of magnanimity that might be explored! — Men talk about traveling this way and that, as if seeing were all in the eyes, and a man could sufficiently report what he stood bodily before, when the seeing depends ever on the being. All report of travel is the report of victory or defeat, of a contest with every event

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and phenomenon, and how you come out of it. A blind man who possesses inward truth and consistency will see more than one who has faultless eyes, but no serious and laborious, or strenuous soul to look through them. As if the eyes were the only part of the man that traveled. Men convert their property into cash, ministers fall sick to obtain the assistance of their parishes, all chaffer with sea-captains, etc., as if the whole object were to get conveyed to some part of the world, a pair of eyes merely. A telescope conveyed to and set up at the Cape of Good Hope at great expense, and only a Bushman to look through it. Nothing like a little activity, called life, if it were only walking much in a day, to keep the eye in good order, no such collyrium.

Jan. 12, 1855. P. M. To Flint's Pond *via* Minott's meadow. After a spitting of snow in the forenoon, I see the blue sky here and there. The sun is coming out. It is still and warm. The earth is two thirds bare. I walk along the Mill Brook below Emerson's, looking into it for some life. Perhaps what most moves us in winter is some reminiscence of far-off summer. . . . What beauty in the running brooks! what life! what society! The cold is merely superficial. It is summer still at the core. Far, far within, it is in the cawing of the crow, the

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crowing of the cock, the warmth of the sun on our backs. I hear faintly the cawing of a crow far, far away, echoing from some unseen woodside, as if deadened by the spring-like vapor which the sun is drawing from the ground. It mingles with the slight murmur of the village, the sound of children at play, as one stream empties gently into another, and the wild and tame are one. What a delicious sound! It is not merely crow calling to crow, for it speaks to me too. I am part of one great creature with him. If he has voice, I have ears. I can hear when he calls, and have engaged not to shoot or stone him, if he will caw to me each spring. On the one hand, it may be, is the sound of children at school saying their a, b, abs; on the other, far in the wood-fringed horizon, the cawing of crows from their blessed eternal vacation, out at their long recess, children who have got dismissed, while the vapor, as incense, goes up from all the fields of the spring (if it were spring). Bless the Lord, O my soul, bless Him for wildness, for crows that will not alight within gunshot, and bless Him for hens, too, that croak and cackle in the yard.

Jan. 12, 1859. Mr. Farmer brings me a hawk which he thinks has caught thirty or forty of his chickens since summer, for he has lost so many, and he has seen a hawk like this catch

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some of them. Thinks he has seen this same one sitting a long time upright on a tree, high or low, about his premises, and when at length a hen or this year's chicken had strayed far from the rest, he skimmed along and picked it up without pausing, and bore it off, the chicken not having seen him approaching. He found the hawk caught by one leg and frozen to death in a trap which he had set for mink by a spring and baited with fish. — This one measures nineteen by forty-two inches, and is, according to Wilson and Nuttall, a young *Falco lineatus*, or red-shouldered hawk. It might as well be called the red or rusty-breasted hawk. According to the "Birds of Long Island," mine is the old bird.(?) Nuttall says it lives on frogs, crayfish, etc., and does not go far north, not even to Massachusetts, he thought. Its note, Kee-oo. He never saw one soar, at least in winter. . . .

Farmer says that he saw what he calls the common hen hawk, soaring high, with apparently a chicken in its claws, while a young hawk circled beneath, when the former suddenly let drop the chicken. But the young one failing to catch it, he shot down like lightning, and caught and bore off the falling chicken before it reached the earth.

Jan. 12, 1860. . . . I go forth to walk on the Hill at 3 P. M. Thermometer about +30°.

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It is a very beautiful and spotless snow now, it having just ceased falling. You are struck by its peculiar tracklessness, as if it were a thick, white blanket just spread. As it were, each snow-flake lies as it first fell, or there is a regular gradation from the denser bottom up to the surface which is perfectly light, and as it were fringed with the last flakes that fell. This was a star snow, dry, but the stars of considerable size. It lies up light as down. When I look closely, it seems to be chiefly composed of crystals in which the six rays or leaflets are more or less perfect, with a cottony powder intermixed. It is not yet in the least melted by the sun. The sun is out very bright and pretty warm, and going from it, I see a myriad sparkling points scattered over the surface of the snow, little mirror-like facets, which on examination I find to be, each, one of those star wheels, more or less entire, from one eighth to one third of an inch in diameter, which has fallen in the proper position, reflecting an intensely bright little sun, as if it were a thin and uninterrupted scale of nica. Such is the glitter or sparkle on the surface of such a snow freshly fallen when the sun comes out, and you walk from it, the points of light constantly changing. I suspect that these are good evidence of the freshness of the snow. The sun and wind have not yet destroyed these delicate reflectors. . . .

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As I stand by the hemlocks, I am greeted by the lively and unusually prolonged *tche-de-de de-de-de* of a little flock of chickadees. The snow has ceased falling, the sun comes out, and it is warm and still, and this flock of chickadees, feeling the influences of this genial season, have begun to flit amid the snow-covered fans of the hemlocks, jarring down the snow, for there are hardly bare twigs enough for them to rest on, or they plume themselves in some sunny recess on the sunny side of the tree, only pausing to utter their *tche-de-de-de.*

Jan. 13, 1841. We should offer up our perfect (τέλεια) thoughts to the gods daily. Our writing should be hymns and psalms. Who keeps a journal is purveyor to the gods. There are two sides to every sentence. The one is contiguous to me, but the other faces the gods, and no man ever fronted it. When I utter a thought, I launch a vessel which never sails in my harbor more, but goes sheer off into the deep. Consequently it demands a godlike insight, a fronting view, to read what was greatly written.

Jan. 13, 1852. —— told me this afternoon of a white pine in Carlisle which the owner was offered thirty dollars for and refused. He had bought the lot for the sake of the tree which he left standing.

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Here I am on the Cliffs at half-past three or four o'clock. The snow more than a foot deep over all the land. Few, if any, leave the beaten paths. A few clouds are floating overhead, downy and dark. Clear sky and bright sun, yet no redness. Remarkable, yet admirable, moderation that this should be confined to the morning and evening. Greeks were they who did it. A mother-o'-pearl tint at the utmost they will give you at mid-day, and this but rarely. Singular enough! twenty minutes later, looking up, I saw a long, light-textured cloud, stretching from N. to S. with a dunnish mass and an enlightened border, with its under edge toward the west all beautiful mother-o'-pearl, as remarkable as a rainbow, stretching over half the heavens, and underneath it in the W. were flitting mother-o'-pearl clouds which change their loose-textured form, and melt rapidly away, never any so fast, even while I write. Before I can complete this sentence, I look up and they are gone, like smoke or rather the steam from the engine in the winter air. Even a considerable cloud, like a fabulous Atlantis or unfortunate Isle in the Hesperian sea, is dissolved and dispersed in a minute or two, and nothing is left but the pure ether. Then another comes by magic, is born out of the pure blue empyrean, with beautiful mother-o'-pearl tints, where not a shred of vapor

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was to be seen before, not enough to stain a glass, or polished steel blade. It grows more light and porous, the blue deeps are seen through it here and there, only a few flocks are left, and now these, too, have disappeared, and no one knows whither it is gone. You are compelled to look at the sky, for the earth is invisible. . . .

Why can't I go to his office and talk with ——, and learn his facts? But I should impose a certain restraint on him. We are strictly confined to our men, to whom we give liberty. . . .

We forget to strive and aspire, to do better even than is expected of us. I cannot stay to be congratulated. I would leave the world behind me. We must withdraw from our flatterers, even from our friends. They drag us down. It is rare that we use our thinking faculty as resolutely as an Irishman his spade. To please our friends and relatives we turn out our silver ore in cart-loads, while we neglect to work our mines of gold known only to ourselves, far up in the Sierras, where we pulled up a bush in our mountain walk, and saw the glittering treasure. Let us return thither. Let it be the price of our freedom to make that known.

Jan. 13, 1854. . . . In the deep hollow this side of Brittan's Camp, I heard a singular buzzing sound from the ground exactly like that of a large

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fly or bee in a spider's web. I kneeled down and with pains traced it to a small bare spot as big as my hand amid the snow, and searched there amid the grass and stubble for several minutes, putting the grass aside with my fingers, till, when I got nearest to the spot, not knowing but I might be stung, I used a stick. The sound was incessant, like that of a large fly in agony. But though it made my ears ache, and I had my stick directly on the spot, I could find neither prey nor oppression. At length I found that I interrupted or changed the tone with my stick, and so traced it to a few spires of dead grass, occupying about one quarter of an inch in diameter, and standing in the melted snow water. When I bent these one side, it produced a duller and baser tone. It was a sound issuing from the earth, and as I stooped over it, the thought came over me that it might be the first puling, infantine cry of an earthquake, which would erelong ingulf me. Perhaps it was air confined under the frozen ground, now expanded by the thaw, and escaping upward through the water by a hollow grass stem. I left it after ten minutes buzzing as loudly as at first. Could hear it more than a rod away.

Schoolcraft says [of Rhode Island], "The present name is derived from the Dutch, who called it Roode Eylant (Red Island) from the

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autumnal color of its foliage." (Coll. R. I. Hist. Soc. vol. iii.)

Jan. 13, 1856. . . . Took to pieces a pensile nest which I found . . . probably a vireo's, may be a red-eye's. In our workshops we pride ourselves on discovering a use for what had been previously regarded as waste, but how partial and accidental our economy compared with nature's. In nature nothing is wasted. Every decayed leaf and twig and fibre is only the better fitted to serve in some other department, and all at last are gathered in her compost heap. What a wonderful genius it is that leads the vireo to select the tough fibre of the inner bark, instead of the more brittle grasses, for its basket, the elastic pine needles and the twigs curved as they dried, to give it form, and, as I suppose, the silk of cocoons, etc., to bind it together with. I suspect that extensive use is made of these abandoned cocoons by the birds, and they, if anybody, know where to find them. There were at least seven materials used in constructing this nest, and the bird visited as many distinct localities many times, always with the purpose or design of finding some particular one of these materials, as much as if it had said to itself, "Now I will go and get some old hornet's nest from one of those that I saw last fall down in the maple swamp, perhaps thrust my

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bill into them, or some silk from those cocoons I saw this morning."

Jan. 13, 1857. I hear one thrumming a guitar below stairs. It reminds me of moments that I have lived. What a comment on our life is the least strain of music! It lifts me above all the dust and mire of the universe. I soar or hover with clean skirts over the field of my life. It is ever life within life in concentric spheres. The field wherein I toil or rust at any time is at the same time the field for such different kinds of life! The farmer's boy or hired man has an instinct which tells him as much indistinctly; hence his dreams and his restlessness, hence even it is that he wants money to realize his dream with. The identical field where I am leading my humdrum life, let but a strain of music be heard there, is seen to be the field of some unrecorded crusade or tournament, the thought of which excites in us an ecstasy of joy. The way in which I am affected by this faint thrumming advertises me that there is still some health and immortality in the springs of me. What an elixir is this sound! I who but lately came and went and lived under — *a dish cover* — live now under the heavens. It releases me, bursts my bonds. Almost all, perhaps all, our life is, speaking comparatively, a stereotyped despair, *i. e.*, we never at any time realize

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the full grandeur of our destiny. We habitually, forever and ever, underrate our fate. Talk of infidels, why, all of the race of man, except in the rarest moments when they are lifted above themselves by an ecstasy, are infidels. With the very best disposition, what does my belief amount to? This poor, timid, unenlightened, thick-skinned creature, what *can* it believe? I am, of course, hopelessly ignorant and unbelieving until some divinity stirs within me. Ninety-nine one hundredths of our lives we are mere hedgers and ditchers, but from time to time we meet with reminders of our destiny. — We hear the kindred vibrations, music! and we put out our dormant feelers into the limits of the universe. We attain to wisdom that passeth understanding. The stable continents undulate. The hard and fixed becomes fluid.

> "Unless above himself he can
> Erect himself, how poor a thing is man."

When I *hear* music, I fear no danger. I am invulnerable. I see no foe. I am related to the earliest times, and to the latest.

There are infinite degrees of life, from that which is next to sleep and death to that which is forever awake and immortal. We must not confound man with man. We cannot conceive of a greater difference than that between the life of one man and that of another. I am con-

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strained to believe that the mass of men are never so lifted above themselves that their destiny is seen to be transcendently beautiful and grand.

Jan. 13, 1858. . . . At Jonathan Buffum's, Lynn. Lecture in John B. Alley's parlor. Mr. J. Buffum describes to me ancient wolf traps, made probably by the early settlers in Lynn, perhaps after an Indian model; one some two miles from the shore near Saugus, another more northerly, holes say seven feet deep, about as long, and some three feet wide, stoned up very smoothly and perhaps converging a little, so that the wolf could not get out. — Tradition says that a wolf and a squaw were one morning found in the same hole, staring at each other.

Jan. 13, 1860. . . . Farmer says that he remembers his father saying that as he stood in a field once, he saw a hawk soaring above and eying something on the ground. Looking round, he saw a weasel there eying the hawk. Just then the hawk stooped, and the weasel at the same instant sprang upon him. Up went the hawk with the weasel, but by and by began to come down as fast as he went up, rolling over and over, till he struck the ground. His father going to him, raised him up, when out hopped the weasel from under his wing, and ran off, none the worse for his fall.

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Jan. 14, 1852. . . . I love to see now a cock of deep, reddish meadow hay full of ferns and other meadow plants of the coarsest kind. My imagination supplies the green and the hum of bees. What a memento of summer such a hay-cock! To stand beside one covered with snow in winter through which the dry meadow plants peep out! And yet our hopes survive. . . .

As usual, there was no blueness in the ruts and crevices of the snow to-day. What kind of atmosphere does this require? When I observed it the other day, it was a rather moist air, some snow falling, the sky completely overcast, and the weather not very cold. It is one of the most interesting phenomena of the winter.

Jan. 14, 1854. If the writers of the brazen age are most suggestive to thee, confine thyself to them, and leave those of the Augustan age to dust and the bookworms. . . .

Cato makes the vineyard of first importance to a farm; second, a well-watered garden; third, a willow plantation (*salictum*); fourth, an olive yard (*oletum*); fifth, a meadow, or grass ground (*pratum*); sixth, a grain field or tillage (*campus frumentarius*); seventh, a wood for fuel (?) (*silva cædua*); Varro speaks of planting and cultivating this; eighth, an *arbustum;* Columella says it is a plantation of elms, and for

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vines to rest on; ninth, a wood that yields mast (*glandaria silva*). He says elsewhere the *arbustum* yields *ligna et virgæ*.

He says, "In early manhood, the master of a family must study to plant his ground. As for building, he must think a long time about it (*diu cogitare*). He must not think about planting, but do it. When he gets to be thirty-six years old, then let him build, if he has his ground planted. So build that the villa may not have to seek the farm, nor the farm the villa." This contains sound advice, as pertinent now as ever. . . . "If you have done one thing late, you will do all your work late," says Cato to the farmer. — They raised a sallow (*salicem*), to tie vines with. Ground subject to fogs is called *nebulosus*. . . . Oxen "must have muzzles (or little baskets, *fiscellas*) that they may not go in quest of grass (*ne herbam sectentur*), when they plow."

Jan. 14, 1855. Skated to Baker Farm with a rapidity which astonished myself, before the wind, feeling the rise and fall (the water having settled in the suddenly cold night) which I had not time to see. . . . A man feels like a new creature, a deer perhaps, moving at this rate. He takes new possession of nature in the name of his own majesty. There was I, and there, and there, as Mercury went down the Idæan

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mountains. I judged that in a quarter of an hour I was three and one half miles from home without having made any particular exertion.

Jan. 14, 1857. Up Assabet on ice. . . . I notice on the black willows, and also on the alders and white maples overhanging the stream, numerous dirty-white cocoons, about an inch long, attached by their sides to the base of the recent twigs, and disguised by dry leaves curled about them, a sort of fruit which these trees bear now. The leaves are not attached to the twigs, but artfully arranged about, and fastened to the cocoons. Almost every little cluster of leaves contains a cocoon, apparently of one species, so that often when you would think the trees were retaining their leaves, it is not the trees, but the caterpillars that have retained them. I do not see a cluster of leaves on a maple, unless on a dead twig, but it conceals a cocoon. Yet I cannot find one alive. They are all crumbled within. The black willows retain very few of their narrow curled leaves here and there, like the terminal leaflet of a fern. The maples and alders scarcely any ever. Yet these few are just enough to withdraw attention from those which surround the cocoons. What kind of understanding was there between the mind that determined that these leaves should hang on during the winter

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and that of the worm that fastened a few of these leaves to its cocoon in order to disguise it? I thus walk along the edge of the trees and bushes which overhang the stream, gathering the cocoons which probably were thought to be doubly secure here. These cocoons, of course, were attached before the leaves had fallen. Almost every one is already empty, or contains only the relics of a nymph. It has been attacked and devoured by some foe. These numerous cocoons attached to the twigs overhanging the stream in the still and biting winter day suggest a certain fertility in the river borders, impart a kind of life to them, and so are company to me. There is so much more life than is suspected in the most solitary and dreary scene. They are as much as the lisping of a chickadee.

Jan. 14, 1858. Mr. Buffum says that in 1817 or 1819 he saw the sea-serpent at Swampscott, and so did several hundred others. He was to be seen off and on for some time. There were many people on the beach the first time in carriages partly in the water, and the serpent came so near that they, thinking he might come ashore, involuntarily turned their horses to the shore, as with a general consent, and this movement caused him to sheer off also. The road from Boston was lined with people directly, coming to see the monster. Prince came with

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his spy-glass, saw, and printed his account of him. Buffum says he has seen him twenty times; once alone from the rocks at Little Nahant, where he passed along close to the shore just beneath the surface, and within fifty or sixty feet of him, so that he could have touched him with a very long pole, if he had dared to. Buffum is about sixty, and it should be said, as affecting the value of his evidence, that he is a firm believer in Spiritualism.

Jan. 14, 1860. . . . It is a mild day, and I notice, what I have not observed for some time, that blueness of the air only to be perceived in a mild day. I see it between me and woods half a mile distant. The softening of the air amounts to this. The mountains are quite invisible. You come forth to see this great blue presence lurking about the woods and the horizon.

Jan. 15, 1838. After all that has been said in praise of the Saxon race, we must allow that our blue-eyed and fair-haired ancestors were originally an ungodly and reckless crew.

Jan. 15, 1852. . . . I do not know but the poet is he who generates poems. By continence he rises to creation on a higher level, a supernatural level. . . .

For the first time this winter I notice snow fleas this afternoon in Walden wood. Wher-

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ever I go, they are to be seen, especially in the deepest ruts and foot-tracks. Their number is almost infinite. It is a rather warm and moist afternoon, and feels like rain. I suppose that some peculiarity in the weather has called them forth from the bark of the trees.

It is good to see Minott's hens pecking and scratching the ground. What never-failing health they suggest! Even the sick hen is so naturally sick, like a green leaf turning to brown. No wonder men love to have hens about them, and hear their creaking note. They are even laying eggs from time to time still, the undespairing race!

Jan. 15, 1853. . . . Mrs. Ripley told me this P. M. that Russell had decided that that green (and sometimes yellow) dust on the underside of stones in walls was a decaying state of *Lepraria chlorina*, a lichen; the yellow another species of Lepraria. I have long known this dust, but as I did not know the name of it, *i. e.*, what others called it, and therefore could not conveniently speak of it, it has suggested less to me, and I have made less use of it. I now first feel as if I had got hold of it.

Jan. 15, 1857. . . . As I passed the south shed at the depot, observed what I thought at first a tree sparrow on the wood in the shed, a mere roof open at the sides, under which several men

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were at that time employed sawing wood with a horse-power. Looking closer, I saw, to my surprise, that it must be a song sparrow, it having the usual marks on its breast, and no bright chestnut crown. The snow is nine or ten inches deep, and it appeared to have taken refuge in this shed where was much bare ground exposed by removing the wood. When I advanced, instead of flying away, it concealed itself in the wood, just as it often dodges behind a wall.

What is there in music that it should so stir our deeps? We are all ordinarily in a state of desperation. Such is our life, it ofttimes drives us to suicide. To how many, perhaps to most, life is barely tolerable, and if it were not for the fear of death or of dying, what a multitude would immediately commit suicide. But let us hear a strain of music, and we are at once advertised of a life which no man had told us of, which no preacher preaches. Suppose I try to describe faithfully the prospect which a strain of music exhibits to me. The field of my life becomes a boundless plain, glorious to tread, with no death nor disappointment at the end of it. All meanness and trivialness disappear. I become adequate to my deed. No particulars survive this expansion. Persons do not survive it. In the light of this strain there is no thou nor I. We are actually lifted above ourselves.

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The tracks of the mice near the head of Well Meadow were particularly interesting. There was a level of pure snow there, unbroken by bushes or grass, about four rods across, and here were nine tracks of mice running across it, from the bushes on this side to those on the other, the tracks quite near together, but repeatedly crossing each other at very acute angles, though each particular course was generally quite direct. The snow was so light that only one distinct track was made by all four of the feet, . . . but the tail left a very distinct mark. A single track stretching away almost straight, sometimes half a dozen rods over the unspotted snow, is very handsome, like a chain of a new pattern, and suggests an airy lightness in the body that impressed it. Though there may have been but one or two here, the tracks suggest quite a little company that had gone gadding over to their neighbors under the opposite bush. Such is the delicacy of the impression on the surface of the lightest snow, where other creatures sink, and night, too, being the season when these tracks are made, they remind me of a fairy revel. It is almost as good as if the actors were here. I can easily imagine all the rest. Hopping is expressed by the tracks themselves. Yet I should like much to see, by broad daylight, a company of these revelers hopping

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over the snow. There is a still life in America that is little observed or dreamed of. . . . How snug they are somewhere under the snow now, not to be thought of, if it were not for these pretty tracks. For a week, or fortnight even, of pretty still weather, the tracks will remain to tell of the nocturnal adventures of a tiny mouse. . . . So it was so many thousands of years before Gutenberg invented printing with *his* types, and so it will be so many thousands of years after his types are forgotten perchance. The deer-mouse will be printing in the snow of Well Meadow to be read by a new race of men.

Jan. 16, 1838. Man is like a cork which no tempest can sink, but it will float securely to its haven at last.

The world is never the less beautiful, though viewed through a chink or knot-hole.

Jan. 16, 1852. I see that to some men their relation to mankind is all important. It is fatal in their eyes to outrage the opinions and customs of their fellow-men. Failure and success are therefore never proved by them by absolute and universal tests. I feel myself not so vitally related to my fellow-men. I impinge on them but by a point on one side. It is not a Siamese-twin ligature that binds me to them. It is unsafe to defer so much to mankind and the opinions of society, for these are always, and without

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exception, heathenish and barbarous, seen from the heights of philosophy. A wise man sees as clearly the heathenism and barbarity of his own countrymen as those of the nations to whom his countrymen send missionaries. The Englishman and American are subject equally to many national superstitions with the Hindoos and Chinese. My countrymen are to me foreigners. I have but little more sympathy with them than with the mob of India or of China. All nations are remiss in their duties, and fall short of their standards. Madame Pfeiffer says of the Parsees or Fire-worshipers in Bombay, who should all have been on hand on the esplanade to greet the first rays of the sun, that she found only a few here and there, and some did not make their appearance till nine o'clock. — I see no important difference between the assumed gravity and bought funeral sermon of the parish clergyman and the howlings and strikings of the breast of the hired mourning women of the East.

Bill Wheeler had two clumps for feet, and progressed slowly by short steps, having frozen his feet once, as I understood. Him I have been sure to meet once in five years, progressing into the town on his stubs, holding the middle of the road, as if he drove the invisible herd of the world before him, especially on a military

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day; out of what confines, whose hired man having been, in what remote barn having quartered all these years, I never knew. He seemed to belong to a different caste from other men, and reminded me both of the Indian pariah and martyr. I understood that somebody was found to give him his drink for the few chores he could do. His meat was never referred to, he had so sublimed his life. One day since this, not long ago, I saw in my walk a kind of shelter, such as woodmen might use, in the woods by the Great Meadows, made of meadow hay cast over a rude frame. Thrusting my head in at a hole, as I am wont to do in such cases, I found Bill Wheeler there curled up asleep on the hay, who, being suddenly wakened from a sound sleep, rubbed his eyes, and inquired if I found any game, thinking I was sporting. I came away reflecting much on that man's life, how he communicated with none, how now, perchance, he did chores for none, how low he lived, perhaps from a deep principle, that he might be some mighty philosopher, greater than Socrates or Diogenes, simplifying life, returning to nature, having turned his back on towns, how many things he had put off, luxuries, comforts, human society, even his feet, wrestling with his thoughts. I felt even as Diogenes when he saw the boy drinking out of his hands, and threw away his cup.

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Here was one who went alone, did no work, and had no relatives that I knew of, was not ambitious that I could see, did not depend on the good opinions of men. Must he not see things with an impartial eye, disinterested, as the toad observes the gardener. Perchance here is one of a sect of philosophers, the only one, so simple, so abstracted in thought and life from his contemporaries, that his wisdom is indeed foolishness to them. Who knows but in his solitary meadow hay bunk he indulges in thought only in triumphant satires on men. Who knows but here is a superiority to literature, etc., unexpressed and inexpressible, one who has resolved to humble and mortify himself as never man was humbled and mortified, whose very vividness of perception, clear knowledge, and insight have made him dumb, leaving no common consciousness and ground of parlance with his kind, or rather his unlike kindred! whose news plainly is not my news nor yours. I was not sure for a moment but here was a philosopher who had left far behind him the philosophers of Greece and India, and I envied him his advantageous point of view. I was not to be deceived by a few stupid words, of course, and apparent besottedness. It was his position and career that I contemplated.

C—— has a great respect for McKean, he stands on so low a level; says he is great for

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conversation. He never says anything, hardly answers a question, but keeps at work, never exaggerates, nor uses an exclamation, and does as he agrees to. He appears to have got his shoulder to the wheel of the universe. But the other day he went greater lengths with me, as he and Barry were sawing down a pine, both kneeling of necessity. I said it was wet work for the knees in the snow. He observed, looking up at me, "We pray without ceasing."

But to return to Bill. I would have liked to know what view he took of life. — A month or two after this, as I heard, he was found dead among the brush over back of the hill, so far decomposed that his coffin was carried to his body, which was put into it with pitch-forks. — I have my misgivings still that he may have died a Brahmin's death, dwelling at the roots of trees at last, though I have since been assured that he suffered from disappointed love (was what is called love-cracked), than which can there be any nobler suffering, any fairer death for a human creature? That this made him drink, froze his feet, and did all the rest for him. Why have not the world the benefit of his long trial?

Jan. 16, 1853. . . . Trench says that "Rivals, in the primary sense of the word, are those who dwell on the banks of the same stream," or "on opposite banks," but (as he says in the case of

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many words) since the use of water rights is a fruitful source of contention between such neighbors, the word has acquired this secondary sense. My friends are my *rivals* on the Concord in the primitive sense of the word. There is no strife between us respecting the use of the stream. The Concord offers many privileges, but none to quarrel about. It is a peaceful, not a brawling stream. . . . Bailey, I find, has it, "Rival [Rivalis L. . . . qui juxta eundem rivum pascit]."

Jan. 16, 1859. P. M. To Walden, and thence *via* Cassandra ponds to Fair Haven, and down river. . . . As we go southwestward through the Cassandra hollows toward the declining sun, they look successively, both by their form and color, like burnished silver shields in the midst of which we walked, looking toward the sun. The whole surface of the snow, the country over, and of the ice, as yesterday, is rough, as if composed of hailstones half melted together. . . .

The snow which three quarters conceals the Cassandra in these ponds, and every twig and trunk and blade of withered sedge, is . . . cased with ice, and accordingly, as I have said, when you go facing the sun, the hollows look like glittering shields set round with brilliants. That bent sedge in the midst of the shield, each particular blade of it, being married to an icy wire, twenty

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times its size at least, shines like polished silver rings or semicircles. It must have been far more splendid yesterday before any of the ice fell off. No wonder my English companion says that our scenery is more spirited than that of England. The snow crust is rough with the wrecks of brilliants under the trees, an inch or two thick with them under many trees where they last several days.

Jan. 16, 1860. . . . I see a flock of tree sparrows picking something from the surface of the snow amid some bushes. Watching one attentively, I find that it is feeding on the very fine brown chaffy-looking seed of the panicled andromeda. It understands how to get its dinner, to make the plant *give down*, perfectly. It flies up and alights on one of the dense brown panicles of the hard berries, and gives it a vigorous shaking and beating with its claws and bill, sending down a shower of seed to the snow beneath. It lies very distinct, though fine almost as dust, on the spotless snow. It then hops down and briskly picks up from the snow what it wants. How very clean and agreeable to the imagination, and withal abundant, is this kind of food! How delicately they fare! These dry persistent seed vessels hold their crusts of bread until shaken. The snow is the white table-cloth on which they fall. . . . It

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shakes down a hundred times as much as it wants, and shakes the same or another cluster after each successive snow. How bountifully nature feeds them. No wonder they come to spend the winter with us, and are at ease with regard to their food. . . . How neatly and simply they feed! This shrub grows unobserved by most, only known to botanists, and at length matures its hard, dry seed vessels, which, if noticed, are hardly supposed to contain seed; but there is no shrub or weed which is not known to some bird. Though you may have never noticed it, the tree sparrow comes from the north in the winter straight to this shrub, and confidently shakes its panicles, and then feasts on the fine shower of seeds that falls from it.

Jan. 17, 1841. A true happiness never happened, but rather is proof against all hope. I would not be a happy, that is, a lucky man, but rather a necessitated and doomed one.

After so many years of study, I have not learned my duty for one hour. I am stranded at each reflux of the tide, and I, who sailed as buoyantly on the middle deep as a ship, am as helpless as a muscle on the rock. I cannot account to myself for the hour I live. Here time has given me a dull prosaic evening, not of kin to vesper or Cynthia, a dead lapse, where Time's stream seems settling into a pool, a still-

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ness not as if Nature's breath were held, but expired. Let me know that such hours as this are the wealthiest in Time's gift. It is the insufficiency of the hour which, if we but feel and understand, we shall reassert our independence then.

Jan. 17, 1852. . . . The other day as I was passing the —— house . . . with my pantaloons as usual tucked into my boots (there was no path beyond H——'s), I heard some persons in ——'s shed, but did not look round, and when I had got a rod or two beyond, I heard some one call out impudently from the shed, something like, "Holloa, Mister, what do you think of the walking?" I turned round directly, and saw three men standing in the shed. I was resolved to discomfit them, that they should prove their manhood, if they had any, and find something to say, though they had nothing before, that they should make amends to the universe by feeling cheap. They should either say to my face and eye what they had said to my back, or they should feel the meanness of having to change their tone. So I called out, looking at one, "Do you wish to speak to me, sir?" No answer. So I stepped a little nearer and repeated the question, when one replied, "Yes, sir." So I advanced with alacrity up the path they had shoveled. In the mean while one ran

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into the house. I thought I had seen the nearest one. He called me by name faintly and with hesitation, and held out his hand half unconsciously, which I did not decline. I inquired gravely if he wished to say anything to me. He could only wave to the other, and mutter, "My brother." I approached him and repeated the question. He looked as if he were shrinking into a nutshell, a pitiable object he was, and looked away from me while he began to frame some business, some surveying that he might wish to have done. I saw that he was drunk, that his brother was ashamed of him, and I turned my back on him in the outset of this indirect and drunken apology. . . .

In proportion as I have celestial thoughts is the necessity for me to be out and behold the western sky before sunset these winter days. That is the symbol of the unclouded mind that knows neither winter nor summer. What is your thought like? That is the hue, that the purity and transparency and distance from earthly taint of my inmost mind; for whatever we see without is a symbol of something within, and that which is farthest off is the symbol of what is deepest within. The lover of contemplation, accordingly, will gaze much into the sky. Fair thoughts and a serene mind make fair days.

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The rainbow is the symbol of the triumph which succeeds to a grief that has tried us to our advantage, so that at last we can smile through our tears. It is the aspect with which we come out of the house of mourning. We have found our relief in tears. — As the skies appear to a man, so is his mind. Some see only clouds there, some prodigies and portents; some scarce look up at all, their heads, like those of the brutes, are directed towards earth. Some behold there serenity, purity, beauty ineffable. — The world run to see the panorama, while there is a panorama in the sky which few go out to see.

. . . There might be a chapter, when I speak of hens in the thawy days and spring weather on the chips, called Chickweed or Plantain.

Those western vistas through clouds to the sky show the clearest heavens, clearer and more elysian than when the whole sky is comparatively free from clouds, for then there is wont to be a vapor more generally diffused, especially near the horizon, which in cloudy days is absorbed, as it were, or collected into masses, and the vistas are clearer than the unobstructed cope of heaven.

What endless variety in the form and texture of the clouds, some fine, some coarse-grained! I saw to-night what looked like the back bone with portions of the ribs of a fossil monster.

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Every form and creature is thus shadowed forth in vapor in the heavens. . . .

It appears to me that at a very early age the mind of man, perhaps at the same time with his body, ceases to be elastic. His intellectual power becomes something defined and limited. He does not think expansively, as he was wont to stretch himself in his growing days. What was flexible sap hardens into heart wood, and there is no further change. In the season of youth man seems to me capable of intellectual effort and performance which surpass all rules and bounds, as the youth lays out his whole strength without fear or prudence, and does not feel his limits. It is the transition from poetry to prose. The young man can run and leap, he has not learned exactly how far. . . . The grown man does not exceed his daily labor. He has no strength to waste.

Jan. 17, 1854. . . . Cato, prescribing a medicamentum for oxen, says, " When you see a snake's slough, take it and lay it up, that you may not have to seek it when it is wanted." This was mixed with bread, corn, etc.

He tells how to make bread and different kinds of cakes, viz., a libum, a placenta, a spira (so called because twisted like a rope, perhaps like doughnuts), scriblita (because ornamented with characters like writing), globi (globes),

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etc.; tells how to make vows for your oxen with an offering to Mars, and Sylvanus in a wood, no woman to be present, or to know how it is done.

. . . If you wish to remove an ill savor from wine, he recommends to heat a brick, pitch it, and let it down by a string to the bottom of the cask, and let it remain there two days, the cask being stopped. "If you wish to know if water has been added to wine, make a little vessel of ivy wood (*materia ederacea*). Put into it the wine which you think has water in it. If it has water, the wine will run out (*effluet*); the water will remain, for a vessel of ivy wood does not hold wine."

"Make a sacrificial feast for the oxen when the pear is in blossom. Afterward begin to plow in the spring." — "That day is to be holy (*feriæ*) to the oxen, and herdsmen, and those who make the feast." They offer wine and mutton to Jupiter *Dapalis*, also to Vesta if they choose. . . .

When they thinned a consecrated grove (*lucum conlucare*, as if to let in the light to a shady place) they were to offer a hog by way of expiation, and pray the god or goddess to whom it was sacred to be propitious to them, their house, and family, and children. Should not every grove be regarded as a *lucus* or conse-

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crated grove in this sense. I wish that our farmers felt some such awe when they cut down our consecrated groves.

He gives several charms to cure diseases, mere magician's words.

Jan. 17, 1860. . . . Alcott said well the other day that this was his definition of heaven, "A place where you can have a little conversation."

Jan. 18, 1841. We must expect no income beside our outgoes. We must succeed now, and we shall not fail hereafter. So soon as we begin to count the cost, the cost begins.

If our scheme is well built within, any mishap to the outbuilding will not be fatal.

The capital wanted is an entire independence of all capital but a clear conscience and a resolute will.

When we are so poor that the howling of the wind shall have a music in it, and not declare war against our property, the proprietors may well envy us. — We have been seeking riches not by a true industry or building within, but by mere accumulation, putting together what was without till it rose a heap beside us. We should rather acquire them by the utter renunciation of them. If I hold a house and land as property, am I not disinherited of sun, wind, rain, and all good beside? The richest are

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only some degrees poorer than nature. It is impossible to have more property than we dispense. Genius is only as rich as it is generous. If it hoards, it impoverishes itself. What the banker sighs for, the meanest clown may have, leisure and a quiet mind.

Jan. 18, 1852. . . . I still remember those wonderful sparkles at Pelham Pond. The very sportsmen in the distance with their dogs and guns presented some surfaces on which a sparkle could impinge, such was the transparent, flashing air. It was a most exhilarating, intoxicating air, as when poets sing of the sparkling wine. . . .

What is like the peep or whistle of a bird in the midst of a winter storm?

The pines, some of them, seen through this fine driving snow, have a bluish hue.

Jan. 18, 1856. . . . P. M. To Walden, to learn the temperature of the water. . . . This is a very mild, melting winter day, but clear and bright. Yet I see the blue shadows on the snow at Walden. The snow lies very level there, about ten inches deep, and, for the most part, bears me as I go across with my hatchet. I think I never saw a more elysian blue than my shadow. I am turned into a tall blue Persian from my cap to my boots, such as no mortal dye can produce, with an amethystine hatchet in my hand. I am in raptures with my own shadow. Our

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very shadows are no longer black, but a celestial blue. This has nothing to do with cold I think, but the sun must not be too low.

I cleared a little space in the snow, which was nine or ten inches deep, over the deepest part of the pond, and cut through the ice, which was about seven inches thick. . . . The moment I reached the water, it gushed up and overflowed the ice, driving me out of this yard in the snow, where it stood at least two and one half inches deep above the ice. The thermometer indicated 33½° at top, and 34⅔° when drawn up rapidly from thirty feet beneath; so, *apparently*, it is not much warmer beneath.

Jan. 18, 1859. That wonderful frostwork of the 13th and 14th was too rare to be neglected, succeeded as it was also by two days of glaze, but having company, I lost half the advantage of it. . . .

We did not have an opportunity to see how it would look in the sun, but seen against the mist or fog, it was too fair to be remembered. The trees were the ghosts of trees appearing in their winding sheets, an intenser white against the comparatively dusky ground of the fog. I rode to Acton in the afternoon of the 13th, and I remember the wonderful avenue of these faery trees which everywhere overarched my road. The elms, from their form and size, were partic-

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ularly beautiful. As far as I observed, the frostwork was deepest in the low grounds, especially on the *Salix alba* there. I learn from the papers that this phenomenon prevailed all over this part of the country, and attracted the admiration of all. The trees on Boston Common were clad in the same snow-white livery with our Musketaquid trees. . . .

Every one, no doubt, has looked with delight, holding his face low, at that beautiful frostwork which so frequently in winter mornings is seen bristling about the throat of every breathing hole in the earth's surface. In this case, the fog, the earth's breath made visible, was in such abundance that it invested all our vales and hills, and the frostwork, instead of being confined to the chinks and crannies of the earth, covered the mightiest trees, so that we, walking beneath them, had the same wonderful prospect and environment that an insect would have . . . making its way through a chink in the earth which was bristling with hoar frost. That glaze! I know what it was by my own experience; it was the frozen breath of the earth upon its beard. . . .

Take the most rigid tree, the whole effect is peculiarly soft and spirit-like, for there is no marked edge or outline. How could you draw the outline of these snowy fingers seen against the fog, without exaggeration. . . .

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Hardly could the New England farmer drive to market under these trees without feeling that his sense of beauty was addressed. . . . A farmer told me in all sincerity that, having occasion to go into Walden woods in his sleigh, he thought he never saw anything so beautiful in all his life, and if there had been men there who knew how to write about it, it would have been a great occasion for them. Many times I thought that if the particular tree, commonly an elm, under which I was walking or riding were the only one like it in the country, it would be worth a journey across the continent to see it. Indeed, I have no doubt that such journeys would be undertaken on hearing a true account of it. But instead of being confined to a single tree, this wonder was as cheap and common as the air itself. Every man's wood-lot was a miracle and surprise to him, and for those who could not go far there were the trees in the street and the weeds in the yard. . . . The weeping willow with its thickened twigs seemed more precise and regularly curved than ever, and was as still as if carved from alabaster. . . .

It was remarkable that when the fog was a little thinner, so that you could see the pine woods a mile or more off, they were a distinct dark blue. — If any tree is set and stiff, it was now more stiff; if any airy and graceful, it was

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now more graceful. The birches, especially, were a great ornament.

Jan. 18, 1860. . . . As I stood under Lee's Cliff, several chickadees, uttering their faint notes, came flitting near to me as usual. They are busily prying under the bark of the pitch pines, occasionally knocking off a piece, while they cling with their claws on any side of the limb. Of course they are in search of animal food, but I see one suddenly dart down to a seedless pine-seed wing on the snow, and then up again. C—— says that he saw them busy about these wings on the snow the other day, so I have no doubt that they eat this seed.

The sky in the reflection at the open reach at Hubbard's Bath is more green than in reality, and also darker blue. The clouds are blacker, and the purple more distinct.

Jan. 19, 1841. . . . Coleridge, speaking of the love of God, says, "He that loves, may be sure he was loved first." The love wherewith we are loved is already declared, and afloat in the atmosphere, and our love is only the inlet to it. It is an inexhaustible harvest, always ripe and ready for the sickle. It grows on every bush, and let not those complain of their fates who will not pluck it. We need make no beggarly demand for it, but pay the price, and depart. No transaction can be simpler. Love's

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accounts are kept by single entry. When we are amiable, then is love in the gale, and in sun and shade, and day and night; and to sigh under the cold, cold moon for a love unrequited is to put a slight upon nature; the natural remedy would be to fall in love with the moon and the night, and find our love requited.

I anticipate a more thorough sympathy with nature when my thigh bones shall strew the ground like the boughs which the wind has scattered. These troublesome humors will flower into early anemones, and perhaps in the very lachrymal sinus, nourished by its juices, some young pine or oak will strike root.

What I call pain, when I speak in the spirit of a partisan, and not as a citizen of the body, would be serene being, if our interests were one. Sickness is civil war. We have no external foes. Even death will take place when I make peace with my body, and set my seal to that treaty which transcendent justice has so long required. I shall at length join interest with it.

The mind never makes a great effort without a corresponding energy of the body. When great resolves are entertained, its nerves are not relaxed, nor its limbs reclined.

Jan. 19, 1854. . . . In Josselyn's account of his voyage from London to Boston in 1638, he says, "June, the first day in the afternoon, very

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thick, foggie weather, we sailed by an enchanted island," etc. This kind of remark, to be found in so many accounts of voyages, appears to be a fragment of tradition come down from the earliest account of Atlantis and its disappearance.

Varro, having enumerated certain writers on agriculture, says accidentally that they wrote "soluta ratione," *i. e.*, in prose. This suggests the difference between the looseness of prose and the precision of poetry. A perfect expression requires a particular rhythm or measure for which no other can be substituted. The prosaic is always a loose expression.

Jan. 19, 1856. Another bright winter day. P. M. To river to get some water-asclepias, to see what birds' nests are made of. . . .

As I came home through the village at 8.15 P. M., by a bright moonlight, the moon nearly full and not more than 18° from the zenith, the wind N. W. but not strong, and the air pretty cold, I saw the melon-rind arrangement of the clouds on a larger scale and more distinct than ever before. There were eight or ten courses of clouds, so broad that with equal intervals of blue sky they occupied the whole width of the heavens, broad white cirro-stratus, in perfectly regular curves from W. to E. across the whole sky. The four middle ones, occupying the greater part of the visible cope, were par-

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ticularly distinct. They were all as regularly arranged as the lines on a melon, and with much straighter sides, as if cut with a knife. I hear that it attracted the attention of those who were abroad at 7 P. M., and now at 9 P. M. it is scarcely less remarkable. On one side of the heavens, N. or S., the intervals of blue look almost black by contrast. There is now, at nine, a strong wind from the N. W. Why do these bars extend east and west? Is it the influence of the sun which set so long ago? or of the rotation of the earth? The bars which I notice so often morning and evening are apparently connected with the sun at those periods.

Jan. 20, 1841. Disappointment will make us conversant with the nobler part of our nature. It will chasten us and prepare us to meet accident on higher ground the next time. As Hannibal taught the Romans the art of war, so is all misfortune only a stepping-stone to fortune. The desultory moments which are the grimmest feature of misfortune are a step before me on which I should set foot, and not stumbling-blocks in the path. To extract its whole good, I must be disappointed with the best fortune, and not be bribed by sunshine or health.

O Happiness, what is the stuff thou art made of? — Is it not gossamer and floating spider's webs? a crumpled sunbeam — a coiled

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dew-line settling on some flower? What moments will not supply the reel from which thou mayst be wound off? Thou art as subtle as the pollen of flowers and the sporules of the fungi.

When I meet a person unlike me, I find myself *wholly* in the unlikeness. In what I am unlike others, in that I am.

When we ask for society, we do not want the double of ourselves, but the complement rather. Society should be additive and helpful. We would be reinforced by its alliance. True friends will know how to use each other in this respect, and never barter or exchange their common wealth, just as barter is unknown in families. They will not dabble in the general coffers, but each will put his finger into the private coffer of the other. They will be most familiar, they will be most unfamiliar, for they will be so one and single that common themes and things will have to be bandied between them, but in silence they will digest them as one mind; they will at the same time be so true and double that each will be to the other as admirable and as inaccessible as a star. When my friend comes, I view his orb "through optic glass" "at evening from the top of Fésolé." After the longest earthly period, he will still be in apogee to me. — But we should so meet ourselves as we meet our

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friends, and still ever seek for ourselves in that which is above us and unlike us. So only shall we see what has been well called the light of our own countenances.

Jan. 20, 1853. . . . Ah, our indescribable winter sky, between emerald (?) and amber (?), such as summer never sees. What more beautiful or soothing to the eye than those finely divided . . . clouds, like down or loose-spread cotton batting, now reaching up from the west above my head! Beneath this a different stratum, all whose ends are curved like spray or wisps. All kinds of figures are drawn on the blue ground with this fibrous white paint.

Jan. 20, 1855. . . . In certain places, standing on their snowiest side, the woods were incredibly fair, white as alabaster. Indeed, the young pines reminded you of the purest statuary, and the stately, full-grown ones, towering around, affected you as if you stood in a Titanic sculptor's studio, so purely and delicately white, transmitting the light, their dark trunks all concealed; and in many places where the snow lay on withered oak leaves between you and the light, various delicate, fawn-colored tints blending with the white enhanced the beauty.

. . . How new all things seem! Here is a broad, shallow pool in the fields which yesterday was slush, now converted into a soft, white,

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fleecy snow ice. . . . It is like the beginning of the world. There is nothing hackneyed where a new snow can come and cover all the landscape. . . . The world is not only new to the eye, but is still as at creation. Every blade and leaf is hushed, not a bird or insect is heard, only, perchance, a faint tinkling sleigh-bell in the distance. . . . The snow still adheres conspicuously to the N. W. sides of the stems of the trees, quite up to their summits, with a remarkably sharp edge in that direction. . . . It would be about as good as a compass to steer by in a cloudy day or by night. . . .

We came upon the tracks of a man and dog, which I guessed to be C.'s. Further still, . . . as I was showing to T. under a bank the single flesh-colored or pink apothecium of a Beomyces which was not covered by the snow, I saw the print of C.'s foot by its side, and knew that his eyes had rested on it that afternoon. It was about the size of a pin's head. Saw also where he had examined the lichens on the rails. . . .

Very musical and sweet now, like a horn, is the hounding of a fox-hound heard in some distant wood, while I stand listening in some far solitary and silent field.

I doubt if I can convey an idea of the appearance of the woods yesterday. As you stood in their midst, and looked round on their boughs

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and twigs laden with snow, it seemed as if there could be none left to reach the ground. These countless zigzag white arms crossing each other at every possible angle completely closed up the view like a light drift within three or four rods on every side, the wintriest prospect imaginable. That snow which sifted down into the wood paths was much drier and lighter than elsewhere.

Jan. 20, 1856. In my experience I have found nothing so truly impoverishing as what is called wealth, *i. e.*, the command of greater means than you had before possessed, however few and slight still, for you thus inevitably acquire a more expensive habit of living, and even the very same necessaries and comforts cost you more than they once did. Instead of gaining, you have lost some independence, and if your income should be suddenly lessened, you would find yourself poor, though possessed of the same means which once made you rich. Within the last five years I have had the command of a little more money than in the previous five years, for I have sold some books and some lectures, yet I have not been a whit better fed or clothed or warmed or sheltered, not a whit richer, except that I have been less concerned about my living; but perhaps my life has been the less serious for it, and to balance it, I feel now that there is

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a possibility of failure. Who knows but I may come upon the town, if, as is likely, the public want no more of my books or lectures, as, with regard to the last, is already the case. Before, I was much likelier to take the town upon my shoulders. That is, I have lost some of my independence on them, when they would say that I had gained an independence. If you wish to give a man a sense of poverty, give him a thousand dollars. The next hundred dollars he gets will not be worth more than ten that he used to get. Have pity on him. Withhold your gifts.

P. M. Up river. . . . It is now good walking on the river, for though there has been no thaw since the snow came, a great part of it has been converted into snow-ice by sinking the old ice beneath the water. The crust of the rest is stronger than in the fields, because the snow is so shallow and has been so moist. The river is thus an advantage as a highway, not only in summer, and when the ice is bare in winter, but even when the snow lies very deep in the fields. It is invaluable to the walker, being now, not only the most interesting, but, excepting the narrow and unpleasant track in the highway, the only practicable route. The snow never lies so deep over it as elsewhere, and, if deep, it sinks the ice and is soon converted into snow-ice to a great extent, beside being blown out of the river

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valley. Neither is it drifted here. Here, where you cannot walk at all in the summer, is better walking than elsewhere in the winter. But what a different aspect has the river's brim from what it wears in summer! I do not at this moment hear an insect's hum, nor see a bird or a flower. That museum of animal and vegetable life, a meadow, is now reduced to a uniform level of white snow, with only half a dozen kinds of shrubs and weeds rising here and there above it.

Jan. 20, 1857. . . . I hear that Boston harbor froze over on the 18th down to Fort Independence.

The river has been frozen everywhere except at the very few swiftest places since about December 18th, and *everywhere* since about January 1st.

At R. W. E.'s this evening at about 6 P. M., I was called out to see E.'s cave in the snow. It was a hole about two and a half feet wide and six feet long into a drift, a little winding, and he had got a lamp at the inner extremity. I observed as I approached in a course at right angles with the length of the cave, that its mouth was lit as if the light were close to it, so that I did not suspect its depth. Indeed, the light of this lamp was remarkably reflected and distributed. The snowy walls were one universal reflector with countless facets. I think that one

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lamp would light sufficiently a hall built of this material. The snow about the mouth of the cave within had the yellow color of the flame to me approaching, as if the lamp were close to it. We afterward buried the lamp in a little crypt in this snow-drift, and walled it in, and found that its light was visible even in this twilight through fifteen inches thickness of snow. The snow was all aglow with it. If it had been darker, probably it would have been visible through a much greater thickness. — But what was most surprising to me, when E. crawled into the extremity of his cave, and shouted at the top of his voice, it sounded ridiculously faint, as if he were a quarter of a mile off. At first I could not believe that he spoke loud, but we all of us crawled in by turns, and though our heads were only six feet from those outside, our loudest shouting only amused and surprised them. Apparently the porous snow drank up all the sound. The voice was in fact muffled by the surrounding snow walls, and I saw that we might lie in that hole screaming for assistance in vain while travelers were passing along twenty feet distant. It had the effect of ventriloquism. So you need only make a snow house in your yard and pass an hour in it, to realize a good deal of Esquimaux life.

Jan. 20, 1859. . . . Among four or five pick-

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erel in a "well" on the river, I see one with distinct transverse bars, as I look down on its back, not quite across the back, but plain as they spring from the side of the back, while all the others are uniformly dark above. Is not the former *Esox fasciatus?* . . .

The green of the ice and water begins to be visible about half an hour before sunset. Is it produced by the reflected blue of the sky mingling with the yellow or pink of the setting sun?

Jan. 21, 1838. Man is the artificer of his own happiness. Let him beware how he complains of the disposition of circumstances, for it is his own disposition he blames. If this is sour, or that rough, or the other steep, let him think if it be not his work. If his look curdles all hearts, let him not complain of a sour reception; if he hobble in his gait, let him not grumble at the roughness of the way; if he is weak in the knees, let him not call the hill steep. This was the pith of the inscription on the wall of the Swedish inn, "You will find at Trolhate excellent bread, meat, and wine, provided you bring them with you!"

Every leaf and twig was this morning covered with a sparkling ice armor. Even the grasses in exposed fields were hung with innumerable diamond pendants which jingled merrily when brushed by the foot of the traveler.

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. . . It was as if some superincumbent stratum of the earth had been removed in the night, exposing to light a bed of untarnished crystals. The scene changed at every step, or as the head was inclined to the right or to the left. There were the opal, and sapphire, and emerald, and jasper, and beryl, and topaz, and ruby.

Such is beauty ever, neither here nor there, now nor then, neither in Rome nor in Athens, but wherever there is a soul to admire. If I seek her elsewhere because I do not find her at home, my search will be a fruitless one.

Jan. 21, 1841. We can render men the best assistance by letting them see how rare a thing it is to need any assistance. I am not in haste to help men more than God is. If they will not help themselves, shall I become their abettor?

If I have unintentionally injured the feelings of any, or profaned their sacred character, we shall be necessitated to know each other better than before. I have gained a glorious vantage-ground then, and to the other the shaft which carried the wound will bear its own remedy with it, for we cannot be profaned without the consciousness that we have a holy fane for our asylum somewhere. Would that sincere words might always drive men thus to earth themselves!

Jan. 21, 1852. . . . To record truths which

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have the same relation and value to the next world, *i. e.*, the world of thought and of the soul, that political news have to this. . . .

Heard —— lecture to-night. . . . Why did I not like it better? Can I deny that it was good? Perhaps I am bound to account to *myself* at least for any lurking dislike for what others admire, and I am not *prepared* to find fault with. Well, I did not like it then because it did not make me like it, it did not carry me away captive. The lecturer was not simple enough. For the most part, the manner overbore, choked off, stifled, put out of sight the matter. I was inclined to forget that he was speaking, conveying ideas, thought there had been an intermission. Never endeavor to supply the tone which you think proper for certain sentences. It is as if a man whose mind was at ease should supply the tones and gestures for a man in distress who found only the words. One makes a speech and another behind him makes the gestures. — Then he reminded me of Emerson, and I could not afford to be reminded of Christ himself. Yet who can deny that it was good? But it was that intelligence, that way of viewing things (combined with much peculiar *talent*), which is the common property of this generation. A man does best when he is most himself.

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I never realized so distinctly as at this moment that I am peacefully parting company with the best friend I ever had, from the fact that each is pursuing his proper path. I perceive that it is possible we may have a better understanding now than when we were more at one, not expecting such essential agreement as before. Simply our paths diverge.

Jan. 21, 1853. A fine, still, warm moonlight evening. . . . Moon not yet full. To the woods by the Deep Cut at nine o'clock. The blueness of the sky at night is an everlasting surprise to me, suggesting the constant presence and prevalence of light in the firmament, the color it wears by day, that we see through the veil of night to the constant blue. The night is not black when the air is clear, but blue still, as by day. The great ocean of light and ether is unaffected by our partial night. . . . At midnight I see into the universal day.

I am somewhat oppressed and saddened by the sameness and apparent poverty of the heavens, that these irregular and few geometrical figures which the constellations make are no other than those seen by the Chaldæan shepherds. I pine for a new world in the heavens as well as on the earth, and though it is some consolation to hear of the wilderness of stars and systems invisible to the naked eye, yet the

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sky does not make that impression of variety and wildness that even the forest does, as it ought to do. It makes an impression rather of simplicity and unchangeableness, as of eternal laws. . . . I seem to see it pierced with visual rays from a thousand observatories. It is more the domain of science than of poetry. It is the stars as not known to science that I would know, the stars which the lonely traveler knows. The Chaldæan shepherds saw not the same stars which I see, and if I am elevated in the least toward the heavens, I do not accept their classification of them. I am not to be distracted by the names which they have imposed. The sun which I know is not Apollo, nor is the evening star Venus. The heaven should be as new, at least, as the world is new. The classification of the stars is old and musty. It is as if a mildew had taken place in the heavens, as if the stars, so closely packed, had heated and moulded there. If they appear fixed, it is because men have been thus necessitated to see them. . . . A few good anecdotes is our science, with a few imposing statements respecting distance and size, and little or nothing about the stars as they concern man. It teaches how he may survey a country or sail a ship, and not how he may steer his life. Astrology contained the germ of a higher truth than this. It may

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happen that the stars are more significant and truly celestial to the teamster than to the astronomer. . . . Children study astronomy at the district school, and learn that the sun is ninety-five millions of miles distant and the like, a statement which never made any impression on me, because I never walked it, and which I cannot be said to believe. But the sun shines nevertheless. Though observatories are multiplied, the heavens receive very little attention. The naked eye may easily see farther than the armed. It depends on who looks through it. Man's eye is the true star-finder, the comet-seeker. No superior telescope to this has been invented. In those big ones, the recoil is equal to the force of the discharge. "The poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling" ranges from earth to heaven, which the astronomer's eye not often does. It does not see far beyond the dome of the observatory. . . .

As I walk the railroad causeway, I am disturbed by the sound of my steps on the frozen ground. I wish to hear the silence of the night. I cannot walk with my ears covered, for the silence is something positive and to be heard. I must stand still and listen with open ear, far from the noises of the village, that the night may make its impression on me, a fertile and eloquent silence. Sometimes the silence is

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merely negative, an arid and barren waste in which I shudder, where no ambrosia grows. I must hear the whispering of a myriad voices. Silence alone is worthy to be heard. It is of various depths and fertility like soil. Now it is a mere Sahara where men perish of hunger and thirst, now a fertile bottom and prairie of the West. As I leave the village, drawing nearer to the woods, I listen from time to time to hear the hounds of silence baying the moon, to know if they are on the track of any game. If there is no Diana in the night, what is it worth? . . . The silence sings. It is musical. I remember a night when it was audible. I heard the unspeakable. . . .

If night is the mere negation of day, I hear nothing but my own steps in it. Death is with me, and life far away. If the elements are not human, if the winds do not sing or sigh, as the stars twinkle, my life runs shallow. I measure the depth of my own being. . . .

When I enter the woods, I am fed by the variety, the forms of the trees above against the blue, with the stars seen through the pines, like the lamps hung on them in an illumination, the somewhat indistinct and misty fineness of the pine tops, the finely divided spray of the oaks, etc., and the shadow of all these on the snow. The first shadow I came to, I thought was a black

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place where the woodchoppers had had a fire. These myriad shadows checker the white ground and enhance the brightness of the enlightened portions. See the shadows of these young oaks which have lost half their leaves, more beautiful than the trees themselves, like the shadow of a chandelier, and motionless as fallen leaves on the snow; but shake the tree, and all is in motion.

In this stillness and at this distance I hear the nine o'clock bell in Bedford, five miles off, which I might never hear in the village; but here its music surmounts the village din and has something very sweet and noble and inspiring in it, associated in fact with the hooting of owls.

Returning, I thought I heard the creaking of a wagon, just starting from Hubbard's door, and rarely musical it sounded. It was the Telegraph harp. It began to sound at one spot only. It is very fitful, and only sounds when it is in the mood. You may go by twenty times both when the wind is high and when it is low, and let it blow which way it will, and yet hear no strain from it. But at another time, at a particular spot, you may hear a strain rising and swelling on the string, which may at last ripen to something glorious. The wire will perhaps labor long with it before it attains to melody.

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Even the creaking of a wagon in a frosty night has music in it which allies it to the highest and purest strains of the muse. . . .

Minott says his mother told him she had seen a deer come down the hill behind her house, where J. Moore's now is, and cross the road and the meadow in front. Thinks it may have been eighty years ago.

Jan. 21, 1857. . . . It is remarkable how many tracks of foxes you will see quite near the village, where they have been in the night, and yet a regular walker will not glimpse one oftener than once in eight or ten years. . . .

As I flounder along the Corner road against the root fence, a very large flock of snow buntings alight with a wheeling flight amid the weeds rising above the snow . . . a hundred or two of them. They run restlessly amid the weeds, so that I can hardly get sight of them through my glass. Then suddenly all arise and fly only two or three rods, alighting within three rods of me. They keep up a constant twittering. It is as if they were ready any instant for a longer flight, but their leader had not so ordered it. Suddenly away they sweep again, and I see them alight in a distant field where the weeds rise above the snow, but in a few minutes they have left that also, and gone farther north. Beside their rippling note, they have a vibratory twitter,

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and from the loiterers you have a quite tender peep, as they fly after the vanishing flock. What independent creatures! They go seeking their food from north to south. If New Hampshire and Maine are covered deeply with snow, they scale down to Massachusetts for their breakfast. Not liking the grains in this field, away they dash to another distant one, attracted by the weeds rising above the snow. Who can guess in what field, by what river or mountain, they breakfasted this morning? They did not seem to regard me so near, but as they went off, their wave actually broke over me as a rock. They have the pleasure of society at their feasts, a hundred dining at once, busily talking while eating, remembering what occurred in Grinnell Land. As they flew past me, they presented a pretty appearance, somewhat like broad bars of white alternating with bars of black.

Jan. 22, 1852. Having occasion to get up and light a lamp in the middle of a sultry night, perhaps to exterminate mosquitoes, I observed a stream of large black ants passing up and down one of the bare corner posts, those descending having their large white eggs or larvæ in their mouths, the others making haste up for another load. I supposed that they had found the heat so great just under the roof as to compel them to remove their progeny to a cooler place.

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They had evidently taken and communicated the resolution to improve the coolness of the night to remove their young to a cooler and safer locality, one stream running up, and another down, with great industry.

But why did I change? Why did I leave the woods? I do not think that I can tell. I have often wished myself back. I do not know any better how I came to go there. Perhaps it is none of my business, even if it is yours. Perhaps I wanted change. There was a little stagnation, it may be, about two o'clock in the afternoon. The world's axle creaked, as if it wanted greasing, as if the oxen labored with the wain, and could hardly get their load over the ridge of the day. Perhaps if I lived there much longer, I might live there forever. One would think twice before he accepted heaven on such terms. A ticket to heaven must include a ticket to Limbo, Purgatory, and Hell. Your ticket to the Boxes admits you to the Pit also.

How much botany is indebted to the Arabians. A great part of our common names of plants appear to be Arabic. . . .

The pleasures of the intellect are permanent, the pleasures of the heart are transitory. — My friend invites me to read my papers to him. Gladly would I read, if he would hear. He must not hear coarsely, but finely, suffering not

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the least to pass through the sieve of hearing. — To associate with one for years with joy who never met you thought with thought! An overflowing sympathy, while yet there is no intellectual communion. Could we not meet on higher ground with the same heartiness? It is dull work reading to one who does not apprehend you. How can it go on? I will still abide by the truth in my converse and intercourse with my friends, whether I am so brought nearer to or removed farther from them. I shall not be less your friend for answering you truly, though coldly. Even the estrangement of friends is a fact to be serenely contemplated, as in the course of Nature. It is of no use to lie either by word or action. Is not the everlasting truth agreeable to you?

To set down such choice experiences that my own writings may inspire me, and at last I may make wholes of parts. Certainly it is a distinct profession to rescue from oblivion and to fix the sentiments and thoughts which visit all men more or less generally. That the contemplation of the unfinished picture may suggest its harmonious completion. Associate reverently and as much as you can with your loftiest thoughts. Each thought that is welcomed and recorded is a nest-egg by the side of which more will be laid. . . . Perhaps this is the main value of a

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habit of writing, of keeping a journal, that so we remember our best hours, and stimulate ourselves. My thoughts are my company. They have a certain individuality and separate existence, aye, personality. Having by chance recorded a few disconnected thoughts, and then brought them into juxtaposition, they suggest a whole new field in which it was possible to labor and think. Thought begat thought. . . .

When a man asks me a question, I look him in the face. If I do not see any inquiry there, I cannot answer it. A man asked me about the coldness of this winter compared with others, last night. I looked at him. His face expressed no more curiosity or relationship to me than a custard pudding. I made him a random answer. I put him off till he was in earnest. He wanted to make conversation. . . .

That in the preaching or mission of the Jesuits in Canada which converted the Indians was their sincerity. They could not be suspected of sinister motives. The savages were not poor observers or reasoners. The priests were therefore sure of success, for they had paid the price of it.

We resist no true invitations. They are irresistible. When my friend asks me to stay, and I do not, unless I have another engagement, it is because I do not find myself invited. It is

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not in his will to invite me. We should deal with the real mood of our friends. I visited my friend constantly for many years, and he postponed our friendship to trivial engagements, so that I saw him not at all. When in after years he had leisure to meet me, I did not find myself invited to go to him.

Jan. 22, 1854. . . . Once or twice of late I have seen the mother-of-pearl tints and rainbow flecks in the western sky. The usual time is when the air is clear and pretty cool, about an hour before sunset. Yesterday I saw a very permanent specimen, like a long knife handle of mother-of-pearl, very pale, with an interior blue, and rosaceous tinges. I think the summer sky never exhibits this so finely.

No second snow-storm in the winter can be so fair and interesting as the first.

Jan. 22, 1855. Heavy rain in the night and half of to-day, with very high wind from the southward washing off the snow, and filling the road with water. . . . It is very exciting to see where was so lately only ice and snow, dark, wavy lakes dashing in furious torrents through the commonly dry channels under the causeways, to hear only the rush and roar of waters, and look down on mad billows where in summer are commonly only dry pebbles. . . . The musk-rats driven out of their holes by the water are

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exceedingly numerous. Yet many of their cabins are above water on the S. branch. Here there are none. We saw fifteen or twenty of these creatures at least between Derby's bridge and the Tarbel spring, either swimming with surprising swiftness up or down or across the stream, to avoid us, or sitting at the water's edge, or resting on the edge of the ice, or on some alder bough just on the surface. One refreshed himself after his cold swim regardless of us, probed his fur with his nose, and scratched his ear like a dog. They frequently swam toward an apple-tree in the midst of the water, in the vain hope of finding a resting place and refuge there. I saw one looking quite a reddish brown, busily feeding on some plant just at the water's edge, thrusting his head under for it. But I hear the sound of Goodwin's gun up stream, and see his bag stuffed out with their dead bodies.

Jan. 22, 1857. . . . I asked Minott about the cold Friday. He said "it was plaguey cold. It stung like a wasp." He remembers seeing them toss up water in a shoemaker's shop, usually a very warm place, and when it struck the floor it was frozen, and rattled like so many shot.

Jan. 22, 1859. . . . The muskrat hunter last night with his increased supply of powder and shot, and boat turned up somewhere on the

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bank, now that the river is rapidly rising, dreaming of his exploits to-day in shooting muskrats, of the great pile of dead rats that will weigh down his boat before night when he will return wet and weary and weather-beaten to his hut with an appetite for his supper, and for much sluggish . . . social intercourse with his fellows, even he, dark, dull, much battered flint as he is, is an inspired man to his extent now, perhaps the most inspired by this freshet of any, and the Musketaquid meadows cannot spare him. There are poets of all kinds and degrees, little known to each other. The Lake School is not the only or the principal one. They love various things; some love beauty and some love rum. Some go to Rome, and some go a-fishing, and are sent to the house of correction once a month. They keep up their fires by means unknown to me. I know not their comings and goings. How can I tell what violets they watch for? I know them wild, and ready to risk all when their muse invites. The most sluggish will be up early enough then, and face any amount of wet and cold. I meet these gods of the river and woods with sparkling faces (like Apollo's), late from the house of correction, it may be, carrying whatever mystic and forbidden bottles or other vessels concealed, while the dull, regular priests are steering their

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parish rafts in a prose mood. What care I to see galleries full of representations of heathen gods, when I can see actual living ones, by an infinitely superior artist. . . . If you read the Rig Veda, oldest of books, as it were, describing a very primitive people and condition of things, you hear in their prayers of a still older, more primitive and aboriginal race in their midst and roundabout, warring on them, and seizing their flocks and herds, infesting their pastures. Thus is it in another sense in all communities, and hence the prisons and police. I hear these guns going to-day, and I must confess they are to me a springlike and exhilarating sound, like the cock-crowing, though each one may report the death of a muskrat. This, methinks, or the like of this, with whatever mixture of dross, is the real morning or evening hymn that goes up from these vales to-day, and which the stars echo. This is the best sort of glorifying God and enjoying Him that at all prevails here to-day. . . . As a mother loves to see her children take nourishment and expand, so God loves to see his children thrive on the nutriment He has furnished them. . . . These aboriginal men cannot be repressed, but under some guise or other they survive and reappear continually. Just as simply as the crow picks up the worms which are over the fields, having been washed out by the

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thaw, these men pick up the muskrats that have been washed out of the banks. And to some such ends men plow and sail, and powder and shot are made, and the grocer exists to retail them, though he may think himself much more the deacon of some church.

Jan. 22, 1860. Up river to Fair Haven Pond. . . . Where the sedge grows rankly and is uncut, as along the edge of the river and meadows, what fine coverts are made for mice, etc., at this season. It is arched over, and the snow rests chiefly on its ends, while the middle part is elevated from six inches to a foot, and forms a thick thatch, as it were, even when all is covered with snow, under which the mice, etc., can run freely, out of the way of the wind and of foxes. After a pretty deep snow has just partially melted, you are surprised to find, as you walk through such a meadow, how high and lightly the sedge lies up, as if there had been no pressure upon it. It grows, perhaps, in dense tufts or tussocks, and when it falls over, it forms a thickly thatched roof.

Nature provides shelter for her creatures in various ways. If the muskrat has no longer extensive fields of weeds and grass to crawl in, what an extensive range it has under the ice of the meadows and river sides; for the water settling directly after freezing, an icy roof of

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indefinite extent is thus provided for it, and it passes almost its whole winter under shelter, out of the wind, and invisible to men.

Jan. 23, 1841. A day is lapsing. I hear cockerels crowing in the yard, and see them stalking among the chips in the sun. I hear busy feet on the floors, and the whole house jars with industry. Surely the day is well spent, and the time is full to overflowing. Mankind is as busy as the flowers in summer, which make haste to unfold themselves in the forenoon, and close their petals in the afternoon. The momentous topics of human life are always of secondary importance to the business in hand, just as carpenters discuss politics between the strokes of the hammer, while they are shingling a roof. The squeaking of the pump sounds as necessary as the music of the spheres. The solidity and apparent necessity of this routine insensibly recommend it to me. It is like a cane or a cushion for the infirm, and in view of it all are infirm. If there were but one erect and solid-standing tree in the woods, all creatures would go to rub themselves against it, and make sure of their footing. Routine is a ground to stand on, a wall to retreat to. We cannot draw on our boots without bracing ourselves against it. Our health requires that we should recline on it from time to time. When we are in it, the

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hand stands still on the face of the clock, and we grow like corn in the genial darkness and silence of the night. Our weakness wants it, but our strength uses it. Good for the body is the work of the body, and good for the soul, the work of the soul, and good for either, the work of the other. Let them not call hard names, nor know a divided interest.

When I detect a beauty in any of the recesses of nature, I am reminded by the serene and retired spirit in which it requires to be contemplated of the inexpressible privacy of a life. How silent and unambitious it is! The beauty there is in mosses will have to be considered from the holiest, quietest nook. — The gods delight in stillness. . . . My truest, serenest moments are too still for emotion. They have woolen feet. In all our lives, we live under the hill, and if we are not gone, we live there still.

Jan. 23, 1852. . . . Deep Cut going to Fair Haven Hill. No music from the telegraph harp on the causeway where the wind is strong, but in the Cut this cold day I hear memorable strains. What must the birds and beasts think where it passes through woods, who heard only the squeaking of the trees before? I should think that these strains would get into their music at last. Will not the mocking-bird be heard one day inserting this strain in his medley? It in-

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toxicates me. Orpheus is still alive. All poetry and mythology revive. The spirits of all bards sweep the strings. I hear the clearest silver lyre-like tones, Tyrtæan tones. . . . It is the most glorious music I ever heard. All those bards revive and flourish again in those five minutes in the Deep Cut. The breeze came through an oak still waving its dry leaves. The very fine, clear tones seemed to come from the very core and pith of the telegraph pole. I know not but it is my own chords that tremble so divinely. There are barytones and high, sharp tones, and some come sweeping seemingly from farther along the wire. The latent music of the earth had found here a vent, music Æolian. There were two strings in fact, one each side. . . . Thus, as ever, the finest uses of things are the accidental. Mr. Morse did not invent this music. . . .

There are some whose ears help me so that my things have a rare significance when I read to them. It is almost too good a hearing, so that, for the time, I regard my own writing from too favorable a point of view.

Jan. 23, 1854. Love tends to purify and sublime itself. It mortifies and triumphs over the flesh, and the bond of its union is holiness.

The increased length of the days is very observable of late. What is a winter unless

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you have risen and gone abroad frequently before sunrise and by starlight. — Varro speaks of what he calls, I believe, before-light (*antelucana*) occupations in winter, on the farm. Such is especially milking in this neighborhood. Speaking of the rustic villa, he says, You must see that the kitchen is convenient, " because some things are to be done there in the winter before daylight (*antelucanis temporibus*), food is to be prepared and taken." In the study, are not some things to be done before daylight, and a certain food to be prepared there?

Jan. 23, 1857. The coldest day that I remember recording, clear and bright, but very high wind, blowing the snow. Ink froze; had to break the ice in my pail with a hammer. Thermometer at 6¾ A. M., —18°, at 10½, —14°, at 12¾, —9°, at 4 P. M., —5½°; at 7½ P. M., —8°. I may safely say that —5° has been the highest temperature to-day by our thermometer. Walking this P. M., I notice that the face inclines to stiffen. . . . On first coming out in very cold weather, I find that I breathe fast, though without walking faster or exerting myself more than usual.

Jan. 24, 1857. About 6½ A. M. [mercury (?)] in the bulb of thermometer, Smith's on the same nail, —30°. At 9¼ A. M., ours —18°, Smith's —22°, which indicates that ours would have

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stood at 26° at 6½ A. M., if the thermometer had been long enough. At 11½ A. M., ours was —1°, at 4 P. M., +12°.

Jan. 25, 1857. Still another very cold morning. Smith's thermometer over ours, at —29°, [mercury?] in bulb of ours. But about 7, ours was —18°, and Smith's at —24°. Ours, therefore, at first, about —23°.

Jan. 26, 1857. Another cold morning. None looked early, but about 8, it was —14°. Saw Boston Harbor frozen over, as it had been for some time. It reminded me of, I think, Parry's Winter Harbor, with vessels frozen in. Saw thousands on the ice, a stream of men where they were cutting a channel toward the city. Ice said to reach fourteen miles. Snow untracked on many decks.

Ice did not finally go out till about February 15th.

Jan. 23, 1858. The wonderfully mild and pleasant weather continues. The ground has been bare since the 11th. This morning was colder than before. I have not been able to walk up the North Branch this winter, nor along the channel of the South Branch at any time.

P. M. To Saw Mill Brook. A fine afternoon. There has been but little use for gloves this winter, though I have been surveying a great deal for three months. The sun and cock-crowing, bare ground, etc., remind me of spring.

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Standing on the bridge over the Mill Brook, on the Turnpike, there being but little ice on the S. side, I see several small water-bugs (*gyrans*) swimming about, as in the spring. . . .

At Ditch Pond, I hear what I suppose to be a fox barking, an exceedingly husky, hoarse, and ragged note, prolonged perhaps by the echo, like a feeble puppy, or even a child endeavoring to scream, but checked by fear. Yet it is on a high key. It sounds so through the wood, while I am in the hollow, that I cannot tell from which side it comes. I hear it bark forty or fifty times, at least. It is a peculiar sound, quite unlike any other woodland sound that I know. . . .

Who can doubt that men are by a certain fate what they are, contending with unseen and unimagined difficulties, or encouraged and aided by equally mysterious, auspicious circumstances? Who can doubt this essential and innate difference between man and man, when he considers a whole race, like the Indian, inevitably and resignedly passing away in spite of our efforts to Christianize and educate them? Individuals accept their fate and live according to it, as the Indian does. Everybody notices that the Indian retains his habits wonderfully, is still the same man that the discoverers found. The fact is, the history of the white man is a history

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of improvement, that of the red man, a history of fixed habits or stagnation.

To insure health, a man's relation to nature must come very near to a personal one. He must be conscious of a friendliness in her. When human friends fail or die, she must stand in the gap to him. I cannot conceive of any life which deserves the name, unless there is in it a certain tender relation to nature. This it is which makes winter warm, and supplies society in the desert and wilderness. Unless nature sympathizes with and speaks to us, as it were, the most fertile and blooming regions are barren and dreary. . . . I do not see that I can live tolerably without affection for nature. If I feel no softening toward the rocks, what do they signify. . . .

The dog is to the fox as the white man to the red. The former has attained to more clearness in his bark; it is more ringing and musical, more developed; he explodes the vowels of his alphabet better, and besides he has made his place so good in the world that he can run without skulking in the open field. What a smothered, ragged, feeble, and unmusical sound is the bark of the fox! It seems as if he scarcely dared raise his voice lest it should catch the ear of his tame cousin and inveterate foe. . . .

I do not think much of that chemistry that

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can extract corn and potatoes out of a barren soil, compared with that which can extract thought and sentiment out of the life of a man on any soil.

It is in vain to write of the seasons unless you have the seasons in you.

Jan. 23, 1859. . . . There is a cold N. W. wind, and I notice that the snow fleas, which were so abundant over this water yesterday, have hopped to some lee, *i. e.*, are collected like powder under the S. E. side of posts or trees, sticks or ridges in the ice. You are surprised to see that they manage to get out of the wind. On the S. E. side of every such barrier along the shore there is a dark line or heap of them.

Jan. 24, 1841. I almost shrink from the arduousness of meeting men erectly day by day.

Be resolutely and faithfully what you are, be humbly what you aspire to be. Be sure you give men the best of your wares, though they be poor enough, and the gods will help you to lay up a better store for the future. Man's noblest gift to man is his sincerity, for it embraces his integrity also. Let him not dole out of himself anxiously to suit their weaker or stronger stomachs, but make a clear gift of himself, and empty his coffers at once. I would be in society as in the landscape; in the presence of nature there is no reserve nor effrontery.

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Coleridge says of the "ideas spoken out everywhere in the Old and New Testaments," that they "resemble the fixed stars which appear of the same size to the naked or the armed eye, the magnitude of which the telescope may rather seem to diminish than to increase."

It is more proper for a spiritual fact to have suggested an analogous natural one than for the natural fact to have preceded the spiritual in our minds.

By spells seriousness will be forced to cut capers, and drink a deep and refreshing draught of silliness, to turn this sedate day of Lucifer's and Apollo's into an all fools' day for Harlequin and Cornwallis. The sun does not grudge his rays to either, but they are alike patronized by the gods. Like overtasked school-boys, all my members and nerves and sinews petition thought for a recess, and my very thigh bones itch to slip away from under me, and run and join in the melée. I exult in stark inanity. — We think the gods reveal themselves only to sedate and musing gentlemen, but not so; the buffoon in the midst of his antics catches unobserved glimpses which he treasures for the lonely hour. When I have been playing tom fool, I have been driven to exchange the old for a more liberal and catholic philosophy.

Jan. 24, 1852. If thou art a writer, write as

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if thy time were short, for it is indeed short, at the longest. Improve each occasion when the soul is reached. Drain the cup of inspiration to its last dregs. Fear no intemperance in that, for the years will come when otherwise thou wilt regret opportunities unimproved. The spring will not last forever. These fertile and expanding seasons of thy life, when the rain reaches thy root, when thy vigor shoots, when thy flower is budding, shall be fewer and farther between. Again I say, remember thy creator in the days of thy youth. Use and commit to life what you cannot commit to memory. I hear the tones of my sister's piano below. It reminds me of strains which once I heard more frequently, when possessed with the inaudible rhythm I sought my chamber in the cold, and communed with my own thoughts. I feel as if I then received the gifts of the gods with too much indifference. Why did I not cultivate those fields they introduced me to? Does nothing withstand the inevitable march of time? Why did I not use my eyes when I stood on Pisgah? Now I hear those strains but seldom. My rhythmical mood does not endure. I cannot draw from it and return to it in my thought as to a well, all the evening or the morning. I cannot dip my pen in it. I cannot work the vein, it is so fine and volatile. Ah, sweet, ineffable reminiscences.

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In thy journal let there never be a jest. To the earnest, there is nothing ludicrous. . . .

When the telegraph harp trembles and wavers, I am most affected, as if it were approaching to articulation. It sports so with my heart strings. When the harp dies away a little, then I revive for it. It cannot be too faint. I almost envy the Irish whose shanty in the Cut is so near that they can hear this music daily, standing at their door. How strange to think that a sound so soothing, elevating, educating . . . might have been heard sweeping other strings when only the red man ranged these fields, might, perchance, in course of time have civilized him!

Jan. 24, 1856. A journal is a record of experiences and growth, not a preserve of things well done or said. I am occasionally reminded of a statement which I have made in conversation and immediately forgotten, which would read much better than what I put in my journal. It is a ripe, dry fruit of long past experience which falls from me easily without giving pain or pleasure. The charm of the journal must consist in a certain greenness, though freshness, and not in maturity. Here I cannot afford to be remembering what I said or did, my scurf cast off, but what I am and aspire to become.

Reading the hymns of the Rig Veda, translated by Wilson, which consist, in a great

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measure, of simple epithets addressed to the firmament, or the dawn, or the winds, which mean more or less as the reader is more or less alert and imaginative, and seeing how widely the various translators have differed, they regarding not the poetry, but the history and philology, dealing with very concise Sanskrit which must almost always be amplified to be understood, I am sometimes inclined to doubt if the translator has not made something out of nothing, whether a real idea or sentiment has been thus transmitted to us from so primitive a period. I doubt if learned Germans might not thus edit pebbles from the sea-shore into hymns of the Rig Veda, and translators translate them accordingly, extracting the meaning which the sea has imparted to them in very primitive times. While the commentators and translators are disputing about the meaning of this word or that, I hear only the resounding of the ancient sea, and put into it the deepest meaning I am possessed of, for I do not the least care where I get my ideas, or what suggests them. . . .

I have seen many a collection of stately elms which better deserved to be represented at the General Court than the manikins beneath, than the bar-room, the victualing cellar, and groceries they overshadowed. When I see their magnificent domes miles away in the horizon,

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over intervening valleys and forests, they suggest a village, a community there. But, after all, it is a secondary consideration whether there are human dwellings beneath them. These may have long since passed away. I find that into my idea of the village has entered more of the elm than of the human being. They are worth many a political borough. They constitute a borough. The poor human representative of his party sent out from beneath their shade will not suggest a tithe of the dignity, the true nobleness and comprehensiveness of view, the sturdiness and independence, and serene beneficence that they do. They look from township to township. . . . They battle with the tempests of a century. See what scars they bear, what limbs they lost before we were born. Yet they never adjourn, they steadily vote for their principles, and send their roots farther and wider from the same centre. They die at their posts, and they leave a tough butt for the choppers to exercise themselves about, and a stump which serves for their monument. They attend no caucus, they make no compromise, they use no policy. Their one principle is growth. They combine a true radicalism with a true conservatism. Their radicalism is not a cutting away of roots, but a multiplication and extension of them under all surrounding institutions. They take

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a firmer hold on the earth that they may rise higher into the heavens. . . . Their conservatism is a dead but solid heart-wood which is the pivot and firm column of support to all their growth, appropriating nothing to itself, but forever, by its support, assisting to extend the area of their radicalism. Half a century after they are dead at the core, they are preserved by radical reforms. They do not, like men, from radicals turn conservatives. Their conservative part dies out first, their radical and growing part survives. They acquire new states and territories while the old dominions decay and become the habitation of bears and owls and coons.

Jan. 24, 1858. P. M. Nut Meadow Brook. The river is broadly open as usual this winter. You can hardly say that we have had any sleighing at all . . . though five or six inches of snow lay on the ground five days after January 6th. But I do not quite like this warm weather and bare ground at this season. What is a winter without snow and ice in this latitude? The bare earth is unsightly. This winter is but unburied summer. . . .

At Nut Meadow Brook the small sized waterbugs are as abundant and active as in summer. I see forty or fifty circling together in the smooth and sunny bays all along the

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brook. This is something new to me. What must they think of this winter? It is like a child waked up and set to playing at midnight. They seem more ready than usual to dive to the bottom when disturbed. At night, of course, they dive to the bottom and bury themselves, and if in the morning they perceive no curtain of ice drawn over their sky and the pleasant weather continues, they gladly rise again and resume their gyrations in some sunny bay amid the alders and the stubble. I think I never noticed them more numerous, but I never looked for them so particularly. . . . The sun falling thus warmly, for so long, on the open surface of the brook tempts them upward gradually. . . . What a funny way they have of going to bed. They do not take a light and retire up-stairs, they go below. Suddenly it is heels up and heads down, and they go down to their muddy bed, and let the unresting stream flow over them in their dreams. They go to bed in another element. What a deep slumber must be theirs, and what dreams down in the mud there! So the insect life is not withdrawn far off, but a warm sun would soon entice it forth. Sometimes they seem to have a little difficulty in making the plunge. May be they are too dry to slip under. I saw one floating on its back, and it struggled a little while before it righted

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itself. Suppose you were to plot the course of one for a day. What kind of a figure would it make? Probably this feat, too, will one day be performed by science, that maid of all work. I see one chasing a mote, and the wave the creature makes always causes the mote to float away from it. I would like to know what it is they communicate to one another, they who appear to value each other's society so much. How many water-bugs make a quorum? How many hundreds does their Fourier think it takes to make a complete bug? Where did they get their backs polished so? They will have occasion to remember this year, that winter when we were waked out of our annual sleep. What is their precise hour for retiring?

I see stretching from side to side of this smooth brook where it is three or four feet wide what seems to indicate an invisible waving line, like a cobweb, against which the water is heaped up a very little. This line is constantly swayed to and fro, as by the current or wind, bellying forward here and there. I try repeatedly to catch and break it with my hand and let the water run free, but still to my surprise I clutch nothing but fluid, and the imaginary line keeps its place. Is it the fluctuating edge of a lighter, perhaps more oily, fluid, overflowing a heavier? I see several such lines. It is somewhat like the

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slightest conceivable smooth fall over a dam. I must ask the water-bug that glides across it. Ah, if I had no more sins to answer for than a water-bug! They are only the small water-bugs that I see. They are earlier in the spring and apparently hardier than the others. . . .

Between winter and summer there is to my mind an immeasurable interval. When I pry into the old bank swallow holes to-day, see the marks of their bills, and even whole eggs left at the bottom, these things affect me as the phenomena of a former geological period. Yet perchance the very swallow which laid those eggs will revisit this hole next spring. The upper side of her gallery is a low arch quite firm and durable.

Jan. 24, 1859. . . . I see an abundance of caterpillars of various kinds on the ice of the meadows, many of them large, dark, hairy, with longitudinal light stripes, *somewhat* like the common apple one. Many of them are frozen in still, some for two thirds their length, though all are alive. Yet it has been so cold since the rise that you can now cross the channel almost anywhere. — I also see a great many of those little brown grasshoppers, and one perfectly green, some of them frozen in, but generally on the surface, showing no sign of life, yet when I brought them home to experiment on, I found

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them all alive and kicking in my pocket. There was also a small kind of reddish wasp quite lively on the ice, and other insects. There were naked or smooth worms or caterpillars. This shows what insects have their winter quarters in the meadow grass. This ice is a good field for the entomologist. . . . The larger spiders generally rest on the ice with all their bags spread, but on being touched they gather them up.

Monday, Jan. 25, 1841. On the morning when the wild geese go over I, too, feel the migratory instinct strong within me, and anticipate the breaking up of winter. If I yielded to this impulse, it would surely guide me to summer haunts. This indefinite restlessness and fluttering on the perch no doubt prophesy the final migration of souls out of nature to a serener summer, in long harrows and waving lines, in the spring weather, over what fair uplands and fertile elysian meadows, winging their way at evening, and seeking a resting place with loud cackling and uproar. . . .

We should strengthen and beautify and industriously mould our bodies to be fit companions of the soul, assist them to grow up like trees, and be agreeable and wholesome objects in nature. I think if I had had the disposal of this soul of man, I should have bestowed it sooner on some antelope of the plains than upon this sickly and sluggish body.

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Jan. 25, 1852. . . . The cold for some weeks has been intense, . . . a Canadian winter. . . . But last night and to-day the weather has moderated. It is glorious to be abroad this afternoon, the snow melts on the surface; the warmth of the sun reminds me of summer. The dog runs before us on the railroad causeway, and appears to enjoy it as much as ourselves. . . . The clay in the deep Cut is melting and streaming down, glistening in the sun. It is I that melts, while the harp sounds on high. The snow-drifts on the west side look like clouds. — We turned down the brook at Heywood's meadow. It was worth while to see how the water even in the marsh, where the brook is almost stagnant, sparkled in this atmosphere, for, though warm, it is remarkably clear. Water, which in summer would look dark, and perhaps turbid, now sparkles like the lakes in November. The water is the more attractive, since all around is deep snow. The brook here is full of cat-tails, *Typha latifolia*, reed-mace. I found on pulling open, or breaking in my hand as one would break bread, the still perfect spikes of this fine reed, that the flowers were red or crimson at their base where united to the stem. When I rubbed off what was at first but a thimble full of these dry flowerets, they suddenly took in air and flashed up like powder, expanding like feathers

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or foam, filling and overflowing my hand to which they imparted a sensation of warmth quite remarkable. . . . I could not tire of repeating the experiment. I think a single one would more than fill a half peck measure, if they lay as light as at first in the air. It is something magical to one who tries it for the first time. . . . You do not know at first where it all comes from. It is the conjurer's trick in nature, equal to taking feathers enough to fill a bed out of a hat. When you had done, but yet scraped the almost bare stem, they still overflowed your hand as before. . . . As the flowerets are opening and liberating themselves, showing their red extremities, it has the effect of a changeable color.

Ah, then, the brook beyond, its rippling wawaters and its sunny sands. They made me forget that it was winter. Where springs oozed out of the soft bank over the dead leaves and the green sphagnum, they had melted the snow, or the snow had melted as it fell perchance, and the rabbits had sprinkled the mud about on the snow. The sun reflected from the sandy, gravelly bottom, sometimes a bright sunny streak no bigger than your finger reflected from a ripple as from a prism, and the sunlight reflected from a hundred points of the surface of the rippling brook, enabled me to realize summer. . . .

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Having gone a quarter of a mile beyond the bridge where C. calls this his Spanish Brook, I looked back from the top of the hill into this deep dell, where the white pines stood thick, rising one above another, reflecting the sunlight, so soft and warm by contrast with the snow, as never in summer, for the idea of warmth prevailed over the cold which the snow suggested, though I saw through and between them to a distant snow-clad hill, and also to oaks red with their dry leaves, and maple limbs were mingled with the pines. I was on the verge of seeing something, but I did not. If I had been alone, and had had more leisure, I might have seen something to report.

Now we are on Fair Haven, still but a snow plain. Far down the river the shadows on Conantum are bluish. . . . The sun is half an hour high, perhaps. Standing near the outlet of the pond, I look up and down the river with delight, it is so warm, and the air is notwithstanding so clear. When I invert my head and look at the woods half a mile down the stream, they suddenly sink lower in the horizon, and are removed full two miles off. Yet the air is so clear that I seem to see every stem and twig with beautiful distinctness. The fine tops of the trees are so relieved against the sky, that I never cease to admire the minute subdivisions. It is

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the same when I look up the stream. A bare hickory under Lee's Cliff seen against the sky becomes an interesting, even beautiful object to behold. I think, where have I been staying all these days? I will surely come here again.

Jan. 25, 1853. . . . I have noticed that leaves are green and violets bloom later where a bank has been burnt over in the fall, as if the fire warmed it. Saw to-day where a creeping juniper had been burnt, radical leaves of Johnswort, thistle, clover, a dandelion, etc., as well as sorrel and veronica.

Jan. 25, 1856. . . . A closed pitch pine cone, gathered January 22d, opened last night in my chamber. If you would be convinced how differently armed the squirrel is naturally for dealing with pitch pine cones, just try to get one open with your teeth. He who extracts the seeds from a single closed cone, with the aid of a knife, will be constrained to confess that the squirrel earns his dinner. He has the key to this conical and spiny chest of many apartments. He sits on a post vibrating his tail, and twirls it as a plaything. So is a man commonly a locked-up chest to us, to open whom, unless we have the key of sympathy, will make our hearts bleed.

Jan. 25, 1858. . . . What a rich book might be made about buds, including, perhaps, sprouts.

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The impregnable, vivacious willow catkins, but half asleep along the twigs, under the armor of their black scales, the birch and oak sprouts, the rank and lusty dogwood sprouts, the sound, red buds of the blueberry, the small pointed red buds, close to the twig, of the panicled andromeda, the large yellowish buds of the swamp pink, etc. How healthy and vivacious must he be who would treat of these things.

You must love the crust of the earth on which you dwell more than the sweet crust of any bread or cake; you must be able to extract nutriment out of a sand heap. . . .

The creditor is servant to his debtor, especially if the latter is about paying any his due. I am amused to see what airs men take upon themselves when they have money to pay me, no matter how long they have deferred it. They imagine that they are my benefactors or patrons, and send me word graciously that, *if I will come to their houses*, they will pay me, when it is their business to come to me.

Jan. 25, 1860. . . . When the river begins to break up, it becomes clouded like a mackerel sky, but in this case, the blue portions are where the current clearing away the ice beneath begins to show dark. The current of the water striking the ice breaks it up at last into portions of the same form with those which the wind gives to vapor.

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Jan. 26, 1840. Constantly, as it were, through a remote skylight, I have glimpses of a serene friendship-land, and know the better why brooks murmur and violets grow.

Jan. 26, 1841. I have as much property as I can command and use. If by a fault in my character I do not derive my just revenues, there is virtually a mortgage on my inheritance. A man's wealth is never entered in the registrar's office. Wealth does not come in along the great thoroughfares, it does not float on the Erie or Pennsylvania canal, but is imported by a solitary track without bustle or competition from a brave industry to a quiet mind.

I had a dream last night which had reference to an act in my life, in which I had been most disinterested, and true to my highest instinct, but completely failed in realizing my hopes; and now, after so many months, in the stillness of sleep, complete justice was rendered me. It was a divine remuneration. In my waking hours, I could not have conceived of such retribution; the presumption of desert would have damned the whole. But now I was permitted to be not so much a subject as a partner to that retribution. It was the award of divine justice which will at length be, and is even now, accomplished.

Good writing as well as good acting will be

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obedience to conscience. There must not be a particle of will or whim mixed with it. If we can listen we shall hear. By reverently listening to the inner voice, we may reinstate ourselves on the pinnacle of humanity.

Jan. 27, 1841. In the compensation of the dream, there was no implied loss to any, but immeasurable advantage to all.

The punishment of sin is not positive as is the reward of virtue.

For a flower, I like the name pansy or *pensée* best of any.

Jan. 26, 1852. Whatever wit has been produced on the spur of the moment will bear to be reconsidered and reformed with phlegm. The arrow had best not be loosely shot. The most transient and passing remark must be reconsidered by the writer, made sure and warranted, as if the earth had rested on its axle to back it, and all the natural forces lay behind it. The writer must direct his sentence as carefully and leisurely as the marksman his rifle, who is sitting and with a rest, with patent sights and conical balls beside. He must not merely seem to speak the truth. He must really speak it. If you foresee that a part of your essay will topple down after the lapse of time, throw it down now yourself.

A tree seen against other trees is a mere

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dark mass, but against the sky it has parts, has symmetry and expansion. . . . The thousand fine points and tops of the trees delight me. They are the plumes and standards and bayonets of a host that march to victory over the earth. The trees are handsome toward the heavens, as well as up their boles. They are good for other things than boards and shingles.

Obey the spur of the moment. These accumulated it is that make the impulse and the impetus of the life of genius. These are the spongioles and rootlets by which its trunk is fed. If you neglect the moments, if you cut off your fibrous roots, what but a languishing life is to be expected. Let the spurs of countless moments goad us incessantly into life. I feel the spur of the moment thrust deep into my side. The present is an inexorable rider. The moment always spurs either with a sharp or a blunt spur. Are my sides calloused? Let us trust the rider that he knows the way, that he knows when speed and effort are required. What other impulse do we wait for?

Let us preserve religiously, secure, protect the coincidence of our life with the life of nature. Else what are heat and cold, day and night, sun, moon, and stars to us? Was it not from sympathy with the present life of nature that we were born at this epoch rather than at

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another? . . . My life as essentially belongs to the present as that of a willow tree in the spring. Now, now, its catkins expand, its yellow bark shines, its sap flows, now or never must you make whistles of it. Get the day to back you. Let it back you, and the night.

The truest account of heaven is the fairest, and I will accept none which disappoints expectation. It is more glorious to expect a better, than to enjoy a worse.

When the thermometer is down to 20°, the streams of thought tinkle underneath like the rivers under the ice. Thought, like the ocean, is nearly of one temperature. . . .

In winter we will think brave, hardy, and most native thoughts. Then the tender summer birds are flown.

In few countries do they enjoy so fine a contrast of summer and winter. We really have four seasons, each incredible to the other. Winter cannot be mistaken for summer here. Though I see the boat turned up on the shore, and half buried under snow, as I walk over the invisible river, summer is far away with its rustling reeds. It only suggests the want of thrift, the carelessness of its owner.

Poetry implies the whole truth, philosophy expresses a particle of it.

Would you see your mind, look into the sky.

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Would you know your own moods, be weather-wise. He whom the weather disappoints, disappoints himself.

Let all things give way to the impulse of expression. It is the bud unfolding, the perennial spring. As well stay the spring. Who shall resist the thaw? . . .

The word is well naturalized or rooted that can be traced back to a Celtic original. It is like getting out stumps and fat pine roots. . . .

Nature never indulges in exclamations, never says ah! or alas! She is not French. She is a plain writer, uses few gestures, does not add to her verbs, uses few adverbs, no expletives. I find that I use many words for the sake of emphasis, which really add nothing to the force of my sentences, and they look relieved the moment I have canceled these, words which express my mood, my conviction, rather than the simple truth.

Youth supplies us with colors, age with canvas. . . . Paint is costly. . . . I think the heavens have had but one coat of paint since I was a boy, and their blue is paled and dingy and worn off in many places. I cannot afford to give them another coat. Where is the man so rich that he can give the earth a second coat of green in his manhood, or the heavens a second coat of blue. Our paints are all mixed when

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we are young. . . . You would not suspect that some men's heavens had ever been azure or celestial, but that their painter had cheated them. . . .

It is good to break and smell the black birch twigs now. — The lichens look rather bright today. . . . When they are bright and expanded, is it not a sign of a thaw or of rain? The beauty of lichens with their scalloped leaves, the small attractive fields, the crinkled edge! I could study a single piece of bark for hours. How they flourish! I sympathize with their growth. . . .

From these cliffs at this moment, the clouds in the west have a singular brassy color, and they are arranged in an unusual manner. A new disposition of the clouds will make the most familiar country appear foreign, like Tartary or Arabia Felix. . . .

Jan. 26, 1853. Up river on ice, 9 A. M., above Pantry. A sharp cutting air. This is a pretty good winter morning, however. Not one of the rarer. There are from time to time mornings, both in summer and winter, when especially the world seems to begin anew, beyond which memory need not go, for not behind them is yesterday and our past life, when as in the morning of a hoar frost there are visible the effects as of a certain creative energy. The world has visibly been recreated in the night.

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Mornings of creation I call them. In the midst of these marks of a creative energy recently active, while the sun is rising with more than usual splendor, I look back for the era of this creation not into the night, but to a dawn for which no man ever rose early enough — a morning which carries us back beyond the Mosaic creation, where crystallizations are fresh and unmelted. It is the poet's hour. Mornings when men are new born, men who have the seeds of life in them. It should be a part of my religion to be abroad then. This is not one of those mornings, but a clear, cold, airy winter day.

It is surprising how much room there is in nature if a man will follow his proper path. In these broad fields, in these extensive woods, on this stretching river, I never meet a walker. Passing behind the farm-houses, I see no man out. Perhaps I do not meet so many men as I should have met three centuries ago when the Indian hunter roamed these woods. I enjoy the retirement and solitude of an early settler. Men have cleared some of the earth, which is no doubt an advantage to the walker. I see a man sometimes chopping in the woods, or planting or hoeing in a field at a distance, and yet there may be a lyceum meeting in the evening, and there is a book shop and library in the village,

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and five times a day I can be whirled to Boston in an hour. . . .

A slight fine snow has fallen in the night and drifted before the wind. I observe that it is so distributed over the ice as to show equal spaces of bare ice and of snow at pretty regular distances. I have seen the same phenomenon on the surface of snow in fields as if the little drifts disposed themselves according to the same law that makes waves of water. There is now a fine steam-like snow blowing over the ice, which continually lodges here and there, and forthwith a little drift accumulates. But why does it lodge at such regular intervals? I see this fine drifting snow in the air, ten or twelve feet high at a distance. Perhaps it may have to do with the manner in, or the angle at, which the wind strikes the earth.

Jan. 26, 1855. . . . P. M. A thick driving snow, something like, but less than, that of the 19th. There is a strong easterly wind. . . . I am afraid I have not described vividly enough the aspect of that lodging snow of the 19th and to-day partly. Imagine the innumerable twigs and boughs of the forest, as you stand in its midst, crossing each other at every conceivable angle on every side, from the ground to thirty feet in height, with each its zigzag wall of snow four or five inches high, so innumerable at dif

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ferent distances, one behind another, that they completely close up the view like a loose woven and downy screen into which, however, stooping and winding, you ceaselessly advance. The wintriest scene, which perhaps can only be seen in perfection while the snow is yet falling before wind and thaw begin. Else you miss the delicate touch of the Master. A coarse woof and warp of snowy batting, leaving no space for a bird to perch. I see where a partridge has waddled through the snow still falling, making a continuous track. I look in the direction to which it points, and see the bird just skimming over the bushes fifteen rods off. The plumes of pitch pines are first filled up solid, and then they begin to make great snowy cassetêtes or pestles. In the fields the air is thick with driving snow. You see only a dozen rods into its warp and woof. It fills either this ear or that and your eyes with hard, cutting, blinding scales, if you face it. It is forming shelly drifts behind the walls, and stretches in folds across the roads. But in deep, withdrawn hollows in the woods the flakes at last come gently and deviously down, lodging on every twig and leaf, forming deep, downy, level beds between, and on the ice of the pools.

Jan. 26, 1856. . . . As I was talking with Miss Mary Emerson this evening, she said, "It

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was not the fashion to be so original when I was young." She is readier to take my view, to look through my eyes for the time being, than any young woman that I know in the town.

Jan. 26, 1858. . . . One may eat and drink and sleep and digest, and do the ordinary duties of a man, and have no excuse for sending for a doctor, and yet he may have reason to doubt if his life is as valuable and divine as that of an oyster. He may be the very best citizen in the town, and yet it shall occur to him to prick himself with a pin to see if he is alive. It is wonderful how quiet, harmless, and ineffective a living creature may be. No more energy may it have than a fungus that lifts the bark of a decaying tree. I raised last summer a squash which weighed 123½ lbs. If it had fallen on me it would have made as deep and lasting an impression as most men do. I would just as lief know what it thinks about God as what most men think, or are said to think. In such a squash you have already got the bulk of a man. My man, perchance, when I have put such a question to him, opens his eyes for a moment, essays in vain to think, like a rusty firelock out of order, then calls for a plate of that same squash to eat, and goes to sleep, as it is called, and that is no great distance to go, surely.

Some men have a peculiar taste for bad words,

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mouthing and licking them into lumpish shapes, as the bear treats her cubs, words like *tribal* and *ornamentation* which drag a dead tail after them. They will pick you out of a thousand the still-born words, the falsettoes, the wing-clipt and lame words, as if only the false notes caught their ears. They cry encore to all the discords.

The cocks crow in the yard, and the hens cackle and scratch all this winter. Eggs must be plenty.

Jan. 1840. You might as well think to go in pursuit of the rainbow, and embrace it on the next hill as to embrace the complete idea of poetry even in thought. The best book is only an advertisement of it, such as is sometimes sewed in with its cover. It has a logic more severe than the logician's.

Jan. 27, 1840. What a tame life we are living! How little heroic it is! Let us devise never so perfect a system of living, and straightway the soul leaves it to shuffle along its own way alone. It is easy enough to establish a durable and harmonious routine. Immediately all parts of nature consent to it. The sun-dial still points to the noon mark, and the sun rises and sets for it. The neighbors are never fatally obstinate when such a scheme is to be instituted, but forthwith all lend a hand, ring the bell, bring fuel and lights, put by work, and don their

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best garments, with an earnest conformity which matches the operations of nature. There is always a present and extant life which men combine to uphold, though its insufficiency is manifest enough. Still the sing-song goes on. Only make something take the place of something, and men will behave as if it were the thing they wanted. They *must* behave at any rate, and will work up any material.

Jan. 27, 1852. The peculiarity of a work of genius is the absence of the speaker from his speech. He is but the medium. You behold a perfect work, but you do not behold the worker. I read its page, but it is as free from any man that can be remembered as an impassable desert. — I think that the one word which will explain the Shakespeare miracle is unconsciousness. If he had known his own comparative eminence, he would not have failed to publish it incessantly, though Bacon did not. There probably has been no more conscious age than the present. . . .

I do not know but thoughts written down thus in a journal might be printed in the same form with greater advantage than if the related ones were brought together into separate essays. They are now allied to life, and are seen by the reader not to be far-fetched. It is . . . less artful. I feel that in the other case I should have no proper frame for my sketches. Mere

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facts and names and dates communicate more than we suspect. Whether the flower looks better in the nosegay than in the meadow where it grew, and we had to wet our feet to get it! Is the scholastic air any advantage?

Jan. 28, 1852. Perhaps I can never find so good a setting for my thoughts as I shall thus have taken them out of. The crystal never sparkles more brightly than in the cavern. The world has always loved best the fable with the moral. The children could read the fable alone — the grown up read both. The truth so told has the best advantage of the most abstract statement, for it is not the less universally applicable. Where else will you ever find the cement for your thoughts? How will you ever rivet them together without leaving the marks of the file? Yet Plutarch did not so. Montaigne did not so. Men have written travels in this form, but perhaps no man's daily life has been rich enough to be journalized. Our life should be so active and progressive as to be a journey. Our meals should all be of journey cake and hasty pudding. We should be more alert, see the sun rise, not keep fashionable hours, enter a house, our own house as a khan or caravansary. At noon I did not dine, I ate my journey cake, I quenched my thirst at a spring or a brook. As I sat at the table, the hospitality was so perfect and the re-

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past so sumptuous that I seemed to be breaking my fast upon a bank in the midst of an arduous journey, that the water seemed to be a living spring, the napkins grass, the conversation free as the winds, and the servants that waited on us were our simple desires. Cut off from Pilpay and Æsop the moral alone at the bottom, would that content you?

Jan. 27, 1853. Trench says a wild man is a *willed* man; well, then, a man of will who does what he wills or wishes, a man of hope and of the future tense, for not only the obstinate is willed, but, far more, the constant and persevering. The obstinate man, properly speaking, is one who wills not. The perseverance of the saints is positive willedness, not a mere passive willingness. The fates are wild, for they *will*, and the Almighty is wild above all, as fate is.

What are our fields but felds or felled woods. They bear a more recent name than the woods, suggesting that previously the earth was covered with woods. Always in a new country a field is a clearing.

Jan. 27, 1854. I have an old account book found in Dea. R. Brown's garret since his death. The first leaf or two is gone. Its cover is brown paper, on which, amid many marks and scribblings, I find written:—

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"Mr. Ephraim Jones
His Wast Book
Anno Domini
1742."

It extends from November 8, 1742, to June 20, 1743, inclusive. It appears without doubt from the contents of this book that [this Jones] is the one of whom Shattuck writes in his history that he "married Mary Hayward, 1728, and died Nov. 29, 1756, aged 51, having been captain, town-clerk, and otherwise distinguished." His father's name was Ephraim, and he had a son Ephraim. . . . The book is filled with familiar Concord names, the grandfathers and great-grandfathers of the present generation. Dr. Hartshorn, who lived to be ninety-two, and Dr. Temple send to the store once or twice. It is more important now what was bought than who bought it. The articles most commonly bought are mohair (a kind of twist to sew on buttons with), usually with buttons, rum, often only a gill to drink at the store (more of these than anything else), salt, molasses, shalloon, fish, calico, some sugar, a castor hat, almanac, psalter, and sometimes primer and testament, paper, knee-buckles and shoe-buckles, garters and spurs, . . . deer skins, a fan, a cart-whip, various kinds of cloth and trimmings, . . . gloves, a spring knife, an ink-horn, a gun cap,

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spice, . . . timber, iron, earthenware, etc., no tea (I am in doubt about one or two entries), nor coffee, nor meal, nor flour. Of the last two they probably raised all they wanted. Credit is frequently given for timber, and once for cloth brought to the store.

On the whole, it is remarkable how little provision was sold at the store. The inhabitants raised almost everything for themselves. Chocolate is sold once. Rum, salt, molasses, fish, a biscuit with their drink, a little spice and the like, are all that commonly come under this head that I remember. On a loose piece of paper . . . is Jonathan Dwight's (innholder's (?)) bill against the estate of Captain Ephraim Jones for entertainment, etc. (apparently he treated his company), at divers times for half a dozen years, amounting to over £146. — The people apparently made their own cloth and even thread, and hence for the most part bought only buttons and mohair and a few trimmings. . . .

Jan. 18th '42 (3) "John Melvin Cr. by 1 Grey fox 0–2–3."

Feb. 14 '42 (3) "Aaron Parker Cr. by 100 squirell skins 0–6–3." Deer skins were sold at from ten to seventeen shillings. Sometimes it is written "old" or "new tenor." Many of the customers came from as far as Harvard or much farther. . . .

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No butter, nor rice, nor oil, nor candles are sold. They must have used candles, made their own butter, and done without rice. There is no more authentic history of those days than this "Wast Book" contains, and relating to money matters, it is more explicit than almost any other statement. Something *must* be said. Each line contains and states explicitly a fact. It is the best of evidence of several facts. It tells distinctly and authoritatively who sold, who bought, the article, amount, and value, and the date. You could not easily crowd more facts into one line. You are informed when the doctor or deacon had a new suit of clothes by the charge for mohair, buttons and trimmings, or a castor hat, and here also is entered the rum which ran down their very throats. . . .

We begin to die not in our senses and extremities, but in our divine faculties. Our members may be sound, our sight and hearing perfect, but our genius and imagination betray signs of decay. You tell me that you are growing old, and are troubled to see without glasses, but this is unimportant if the divine faculty of the seer shows no signs of decay.

Jan. 27, 1857. . . . The most poetic and truest account of objects is generally given by those who first observe them, or the discoverers of them, whether a sharper perception and

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curiosity in them led to the discovery or the greater novelty more inspired their report. Accordingly, I love most to read the accounts of a country, its natural productions and curiosities, by those who first settled it, and also the earliest, though often unscientific writers on natural science.

Jan. 27, 1858. P. M. To Hill and beyond. It is so mild and moist as I saunter along by the wall and east of the hill that I remember or anticipate one of those warm rain storms in the spring when the earth is just laid bare, the wind is south, and the Cladonia lichens are swollen and lusty with moisture, your foot sinking into them, and pressing the water out as from a sponge, and the sandy places also are drinking it in. You wander indefinitely in a beaded coat, wet to the skin of your legs, sit on moss-clad rocks and stumps, and hear the lisping of migrating sparrows flitting amid the shrub oaks, sit long at a time, still, and have your thoughts. A rain which is as serene as fair weather, suggesting fairer weather than was ever seen. You could hug the clods that defile you. You feel the fertilizing influence of the rain in your mind. The part of you that is wettest is fullest of life, like the lichens. You discover evidences of immortality not known to divines. You cease to die. You detect some buds and sprouts

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of life. Every step in the old rye field is on virgin soil. — And then the rain comes thicker and faster than before, thawing the remaining part of the ground, detaining the migrating bird, and you turn your back to it, full of serene, contented thoughts, soothed by the steady dropping on the withered leaves, more at home for being abroad, sinking at each step deep into the thawing earth, gladly breaking through the gray rotting ice. The dullest sounds seem sweetly modulated by the air. You leave your tracks in fields of spring rye, scaring the fox-colored sparrows along the woodsides, . . . full of joy and expectation, seeing nothing but beauty, hearing nothing but music, as free as the fox-colored sparrow, . . . not indebted to any academy or college for this expansion, but chiefly to the April sun which shineth on all alike, not encouraged by men in your walks, not by the divines or the professors, and to the law-giver an outlaw. . . . Steadily the eternal rain falls, drip, drip, drip, the mist drives and clears your sight, the wind blows and warms your sitting on that sandy upland that April day.

Jan. 27, 1859. I see some of those little cells, perhaps of a wasp or bee, made of clay or clayey mud. It suggests that those insects were the first potters. They look somewhat like small stone jugs.

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Jan. 27, 1860. . . . When you think your walk is profitless and a failure, and you can hardly persuade yourself not to return, it is on the point of being a success, for then you are in that subdued and knocking mood to which nature never fails to open.

Jan. 28, 1841. No innocence can quite stand up under suspicion, if it is conscious of being suspected. In the company of one who puts a mean construction upon your actions, they are apt really to deserve such a construction. While in that society I can never retrieve myself. Attribute to me a great motive and I shall not fail to have one, but a mean one, and the fountain of virtue will be poisoned by the suspicion. Show men unlimited faith as the coin with which you will deal with them, and they will invariably exhibit the best wares they have. I would meet men as the friend of all their virtue, and the foe of all their vice, for no man is the partner of his guilt.

If you suspect me, you will never see me, but all our intercourse will be the politest leave-taking. I shall constantly defer and apologize, and postpone myself in your presence. The self-defender is accursed in the sight of gods and men; he is a superfluous knight who serves no lady in the land. He will find in the end that he has been fighting windmills, and has battered

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his mace to no purpose. The injured man resisting his fate is like a tree struck by lightning which rustles its sere leaves the winter through, not having vigor enough to cast them off. . . .'

Resistance is a very wholesome and delicious morsel at times. When Venus advanced against the Greeks with resistless valor, it was by far the most natural attitude into which the poet could throw his hero, to make him resist heroically. To a devil one might yield gracefully, but a god would be a worthy foe, and would pardon the affront. . . .

Let your mood determine the form of salutation, and approach the creature with a natural nonchalance, as though he were anything but what he is, and you were anything but what you are, — as though he were he, and you were you — in short, as though he were so insignificant that it did not signify — and so important that it did not import.

Jan. 28, 1852. . . . They showed me Johnny Riorden to-day, with one thickness of ragged cloth over his little shirt for all this cold weather, with shoes having large holes in the toes into which the snow got, as he said, without an outer garment, walking a mile to school every day over the bleakest of causeways where I know, by my own experience, a grown man could not

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walk at times without freezing his ears, if they were exposed, but infant blood circulates faster. The clothes with countless patches which claimed descent from pantaloons of mine set as if his mother had fitted them to a tea-kettle first. This little specimen of humanity, this tender gobbet for the fates cast into a cold world with a torn lichen leaf wrapped about him; is man so cheap that he cannot be clothed but with a mat or rag? that we should bestow on him our cold victuals? . . . Let the mature rich wear the rags and insufficient clothing, let the infant poor wear the purple and fine linen. I shudder when I think of the fate of innocency. . . . A charity which dispenses the crumbs which fall from its overloaded tables, which are left after its feasts, whose waste and whose example produced that poverty!

3 P. M. Went round by Tuttle's road and so out on to the Walden road. These warmer days the wood-chopper finds that the wood cuts easier than when it had the frost in its sap-wood, though it does not split so readily. Thus every change in the weather has its influence on him, and is appreciated by him in a peculiar way. The wood-cutter and his practices and experiences are more to be attended to. His accidents, perhaps more than any others, should mark the epochs in the winter day. Now that

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the Indian is gone, he stands nearest to nature. Who has written the history of his day? How far still is the writer of books from the man, his old playmate it may be, who chops in the woods! There are ages between them. Homer refers to the progress of the woodcutter's work to mark the time of day on the plains of Troy, and the inference commonly is that he lived in a more primitive state of society than the present. But I think this is a mistake. Like proves like in all ages, and the fact that I myself should take pleasure in referring to just such simple and peaceful labors which are always proceeding, that the contrast itself always attracts the civilized poet to what is rudest and most primitive in his contemporaries, all this rather proves a certain interval between the poet and the chopper whose labor he refers to, than an unusual nearness to him, on the principle that familiarity breeds contempt. Homer is to be subjected to a very different kind of criticism from any he has received. That reader who most fully appreciates the poet, and derives the greatest pleasure from his work, himself lives in circumstances most like those of the poet himself.

About Brister's spring the ferns which have been covered with snow are still quite green. The skunk-cabbage in the water is already pushed up, and I find the pinkish head of flowers within its spathe is bigger than a pea.

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Jan. 28, 1853. Saw three ducks sailing in the river . . . this afternoon, black with white on wings, though these two or three have been the coldest days of the winter, and the river is generally closed.

Jan. 28, 1857. Am again surprised to see a song sparrow sitting for hours on our wood-pile . . . in the midst of snow in the yard. It is unwilling to move. People go to the pump, and the cat and dog walk round the wood-pile without starting it. I examine it at my leisure through a glass. Remarkable that this coldest of all winters this bird should remain. Perhaps it is no more comfortable this season farther south where they are accustomed to abide. In the afternoon this sparrow joined a flock of tree sparrows on the bare ground west of the house. It was amusing to see the tree sparrows wash themselves, standing in the puddles and tossing the water over themselves. They have had no opportunity to wash for a month perhaps, there having been no thaw. The song sparrow did not go off with them.

Jan. 28, 1858. Minott has a sharp ear for the note of any migrating bird. Though confined to his dooryard by rheumatism, he commonly hears them sooner than the widest rambler. May be he listens all day for them, or they come and sing over his house, report themselves to

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him, and receive their season ticket. He is never at fault. If he says he heard such a bird, though sitting by his chimney side, you may depend on it. He can swear through glass. He has not spoiled his ears by attending lectures and caucuses. The other day the rumor went that a flock of geese had been seen flying over Concord, mid-winter as it was by the almanac. I traced it to Minott, and yet I was compelled to doubt. I had it directly that he had heard them within a week. I made haste to him, his reputation was at stake. He said that he stood in his shed one of the late muggy, April-like mornings, when he heard one short, but distinct *honk* of a goose. He went into the house, took his cane, exerted himself, or that sound imparted strength to him, lame as he was, went up on to the hill, a thing he had not done for a year, that he might hear all around. He saw nothing, but heard the note again. It came from over the brook. It was a wild goose. He was sure of it. He thought that the back of the winter was broken, if it had any this year, but he feared such a winter would kill him too. Hence the rumor spread and grew. I was silent, pondered, and abandoned myself to unseen guides. I drew into my mind all its members like the tortoise. Suddenly the truth flashed on me, and I *remembered* that within a week I had heard of

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a box at the tavern which had come by railroad express containing three wild geese, and directed to his neighbor over the brook. The April-like morning had excited one so that he honked, and Minott's reputation acquired new lustre. . . .

As I come through the village at 11 P. M., the sky is completely overcast, and the perhaps thin clouds are very distinctly pink or reddish, somewhat as if reflecting a distant fire, but this phenomenon is universal, all round and overhead. I suspect there is a red aurora borealis behind.

Jan. 29, 1840. A friend in history looks like some premature soul. The nearest approach to a community of love in these days is like the distant breaking of waves on the sea-shore. An ocean there must be, for it washes our beach. This alone do all men sail for, trade for, plow for, preach for, fight for.

The Greeks, like those of the south generally, expressed themselves with more facility than we, in distinct and lively images, and so far as relates to the grace and completeness with which they treated the subjects suited to their genius, they must be allowed to retain their ancient supremacy. But a rugged and uncouth array of thought, though never so modern, may rout them at any moment. It remains for other than Greeks to write the literature of the next century.

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Æschylus had a clear eye for the commonest things. His genius was only an enlarged common sense. He adverts with chaste severity to all natural facts. His sublimity is Greek sincerity and simpleness, naked wonder at what mythology had not helped to explain. He is competent to express any of the common manly feelings. If his hero is to make a boast, it does not lack fullness, it is as boastful as could be desired. He has a flexible mouth and can fill it readily with strong, sound words, so that you will say the man's speech wants nothing. He has left nothing unsaid, but has actually wiped his lips of it. Whatever the common eye sees at all and expresses as best it may, he sees uncommonly, and expresses with rare completeness. The multitude that thronged the theatre could no doubt go along with him to the end. — The Greeks had no transcendent geniuses like Milton and Shakespeare, whose merit only posterity could fully appreciate.

The social condition is the same in all ages. Æschylus was undoubtedly alone and without sympathy in his simple reverence for the mystery of the universe.

Jan. 29, 1841. There is something proudly thrilling in the thought that this obedience to conscience and trust in God, which is so solemnly preached in extremities and arduous cir-

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cumstances, is only a retreat to one's self and reliance on one's own strength. In trivial circumstances I find myself sufficient to myself, and in the most momentous, I have no ally but myself, and must silently put by their harm by my own strength, as I did with the former. As my own hand bent aside the willow in my path, so must my single arm put to flight the devil and his angels. God is not our ally when we shrink, and neuter when we are bold. . . . When you trust, do not lay aside your armor, but put it on and buckle it tighter. If by reliance on the gods I have disbanded one of my forces, then was it poor policy. . . . There is more of God and divine help in a man's little finger than in idle prayer and trust.

The best and bravest deed is that which the whole man, heart, lungs, hands, fingers, and toes at any time prompt. Each hanger-on in the purlieus of the camp . . . must fall into the line of march. If a single sutler delay to make up his pack, then suspect the fates and consult the oracles again. This is the meaning of integrity; this it is to be an integer, and not a fraction. Be even for all virtuous ends, but odd for all vice. . . .

Friends will have to be introduced each time they meet. They will be eternally strange to one another, and when they have mutually ap-

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propriated the last hour, they will go and gather a new measure of strangeness for the next. They are like two boughs crossed in the wood, which play backwards and forwards upon one another in the wind, and only wear into each other, but never does the sap of the one flow into the pores of the other, for then the wind would no more draw from them those strains which enchanted the wood. They are not two united, but rather one divided.

Of all strange and unaccountable things this journalizing is the strangest. It will allow nothing to be predicated of it. Its good is not good, nor its bad, bad. If I make a huge effort to expose my innermost and richest wares to light, my counter seems cluttered with the meanest home-made stuff, but after months or years, I may discover the wealth of India, and whatever rarity is brought overland from Cathay, in that confused heap, and what seemed perhaps a festoon of dried apple or pumpkin will prove a string of Brazilian diamonds, or pearls from Coromandel.

Men lie behind the barrier of a relation as effectually concealed as the landscape by a mist; and when at length some unforeseen accident throws me into a new attitude toward them, I am astounded as if for the first time I saw the sun on the hillside. They lie out before me like

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a new order of things, as when the master meets his pupil as a man. Then first do we stand under the same heavens, and master and pupil alike go down the resistless ocean stream together.

Jan. 29, 1852. We must be very active, if we would be clean, live our own life and not a languishing and scurvy one. The trees which are stationary are covered with parasites, especially those which have grown slowly. The air is filled with the fine sporules of countless mosses, algæ, lichens, fungi, which settle and plant themselves on all quiet surfaces. Under the nails and between the joints of the fingers of the idle flourish crops of mildew, algæ, fungi, and other vegetable sloths, though they may be invisible, the lichens where life still exists, the fungi where decomposition has begun to take place, and the sluggard is soon covered with sphagnum. Algæ take root in the corners of his eyes, and lichens cover the bulbs of his fingers and his head. . . . This is the definition of dirt. We fall a prey to others of nature's tenants who take possession of the unoccupied house. With the utmost inward alacrity we have to wash and comb ourselves . . . to get rid of the adhering seeds. Cleanliness is by activity not to give any quiet shelf for the seeds of parasitic plants to take root on. . . .

The forcible writer does not go far for his

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themes. His ideas are not far-fetched. He derives inspiration from his chagrins and his satisfactions. His theme being ever an instant one, his own gravity assists him, gives impetus to what he says. He does not speculate while others drudge for him.

I am often reminded that if I had bestowed on me the wealth of Crœsus, my aims must still be the same, and my means essentially the same. . . .

Few are the days when the telegraph harp rises into a pure, clear melody. The wind may blow strong or soft in this or that direction, naught will you hear but a low hum or murmur, or even a buzzing sound, but at length when some undistinguishable zephyr blows, when the conditions, not easy to be detected, arrive, it suddenly and unexpectedly rises into melody, as if a god had touched it, and fortunate is the walker who chances to be within hearing. So is it with the lyres of bards. For the most part it is only a feeble and ineffectual hum that comes from them, which leads you to expect the melody you do not hear. When the gale is modified, when the favorable conditions occur and the indescribable coincidence takes place, then there is music. Of a thousand buzzing strings, only one yields music. It is like the hum of the shaft or other machinery of a steamboat,

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which at length might become music in a divine hand. . . .

Heard C. lecture to-night. It was a bushel of nuts, perhaps the most original lecture I ever heard; ever so unexpected, not to be foretold, and so sententious that you could not look at him, and take his thought at the same time. You had to give your undivided attention to the thoughts, for you were not assisted by set phrases or modes of speech intervening. There was no sloping up or down to or from his points. It was all genius, no talent. It required more close attention, more abstraction from surrounding circumstances than any lecture I have heard, for well as I know C., he more than any man disappoints my expectation. When I meet him in the dark, hear him, I cannot realize that I ever saw him before. He will be strange, unexpected to his best acquaintance. I cannot associate the lecturer with the companion of my walks. The lecture was from so original and peculiar a point of view, yet just to himself in the main, that I doubt if three in the audience apprehended a tithe of what he said. It was so hard to hear that doubtless few made the exertion, a thick succession of mountain passes, and no intermediate slopes and plains. Other lectures, even the best, in which so much space is given to the elaborate development of a few

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ideas, seemed somewhat meagre in comparison. Yet it would be how much more glorious if talent were added to genius, if there were a just arrangement and development of the thoughts, if each step were not a leap, but he ran a space to take a yet higher leap. Most of the spectators sat in front of the performer, but here was one who, by accident, sat all the while on one side, and his report was peculiar and startling.

Jan. 30, 1852. Channing's lecture was full of wise, acute, and witty observations, yet most of the audience did not know but it was mere incoherent and reckless verbiage and nonsense. I lose my respect for people who do not know what is good and true. I know full well that readers and hearers, with the fewest exceptions, ask me for my second best.

Jan. 29, 1854. A very cold morning. Mercury 18° below zero. — Varro says *arista*, the beard of grain, is so called because it dries first (*quod arescit prima*), the grain, *granum*, is *a gerendo*, for the object of planting is that this may be borne. "But the spica or ear which the rustics call speca, as they have received it from their forefathers, seems to be named from *spe* (hope), *eam enim quod sperant fore*, because they hope that this will be hereafter."

Jan. 29, 1856. . . . It is observable that not only the moose and the wolf disappear before

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the civilized man, but even many species of insects, such as the black fly and the almost microscopic "No-see-em." How imperfect a notion have we commonly of what was the actual condition of the place where we dwell, three centuries ago.

Jan. 29, 1858. P. M. To Great Meadows at Copan. . . . Found some splendid fungi on old aspens used for a fence; quite firm, reddish white above, and bright vermilion beneath, or perhaps more scarlet, reflecting various shades as it is turned. It is remarkable that the upper side of the fungus, which must, as here, commonly be low on decaying wood, so that we look down on it, is not bright colored nor handsome, and it was only when I had broken it off and turned it over that I was surprised by its brilliant color. This intense vermilion (?) face, which would be known to every boy in the town if it were turned upward, faces the earth, and is discerned only by the curious naturalist. Its ear is turned down listening to the honest praises of the earth. It is like a light red velvet or damask. These silent and motionless fungi with their ears turned ever downward to the earth, revealing their bright color perchance only to the prying naturalist who turns them upward, remind me of the "Hear-all" of the story.

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Jan. 29, 1860. . . . As usual, I now see, as I walk on the river and river meadow ice, thinly covered with the fresh snow, that conical rainbow, or parabola of rainbow-colored reflections from the myriad reflecting crystals of the snow, *i. e.*, as I walk toward the sun, always a little in advance of me, of course, the angle of reflection being equal to that of incidence.

Jan. 30, 1841. . . . The fashions of the wood are more fluctuating than those of Paris. Snow, rime, ice, green and dry leaves incessantly make new patterns. There are all the shapes and hues of the kaleidoscope, and the designs and ciphers of books of heraldry, in the outlines of the trees. Every time I see a nodding pine top, it seems as if a new fashion of wearing plumes had come into vogue. . . .

You glance up these paths, closely embraced by bent trees, as through the side aisles of a cathedral, and expect to hear a choir chanting from their depths. You are never so far in them as they are far before you. Their secret is where you are not, and where your feet can never carry you. . . .

Here is the distinct trail of a fox stretching a quarter of a mile across the pond. . . . I am curious to know what has determined its graceful curvatures, its greater or less spaces and distinctness, and how surely they were coincident

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with the fluctuations of some mind, why they now lead me two steps to the right, and then three to the left. If these things are not to be called up and accounted for in the Lamb's Book of Life, I shall set them down for careless accountants. Here was the expression of the divine mind this morning. The pond was his journal, and last night's snow made a *tabula rasa* for him. I know which way a mind wended this morning, what horizon it faced, by the setting of these tracks, whether it moved slowly or rapidly, by the greater or less intervals and distinctness, for the swiftest step leaves yet a lasting trace. . . . Fair Haven pond is scored with the trails of foxes, and you may see where they have gamboled and gone through a hundred evolutions, which testify to a singular listlessness and leisure in nature.

Suddenly looking down the river, I saw a fox some sixty rods off making across the hills on my left. As the snow lay five inches deep, he made but slow progress, but it was no impediment to me. So yielding to the instinct of the chase, I tossed my head aloft, and bounded away, snuffing the air like a fox-hound, and spurning the world and human society at each bound. It seemed the woods rang with the hunter's horn, and Diana and all the satyrs joined in the chase and cheered me on. Olympian and

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Elean youths were waving palms on the hills. In the meanwhile, I gained rapidly on the fox, but he showed a remarkable presence of mind, for instead of keeping up the face of the hill, which was steep and unwooded in that part, he kept along the slope in the direction of the forest, though he lost ground by it. Notwithstanding his fright, he took no step which was not beautiful. The course on his part was a series of most graceful curves. It was a sort of leopard canter, I should say, as if he were nowise impeded by the snow, but were husbanding his strength all the while. When he doubled, I wheeled and cut him off, bounding with fresh vigor, Antæus-like recovering my strength each time I touched the snow. Having got near enough for a fair view, just as he was slipping into the wood, I gracefully yielded him the palm. He ran as if there were not a bone in his back, occasionally dropping his muzzle to the snow for a rod or two, and then tossing his head aloft, when satisfied of his course. When he came to a declivity, he put his fore feet together, and slid down it like a cat. He trod so softly that you could not have heard from any nearness, and yet with such expression that it would not have been quite inaudible from any distance. So hoping this experience would prove a useful lesson to him, I returned to the village by the highway of the river.

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Jan. 30, 1852. I feel as if I were gradually parting company with certain friends, just as I perceive familiar objects successively disappear when I am leaving my native town in the cars. . . .

After all, where is the flower lore? for the first book, not the last, should contain the poetry of flowers. The natural system may tell us the value of a plant in medicine or the arts, or for food, but neither it nor the Linnæan, to any great extent, tells us its chief value and significance to man, what in any measure accounts for its beauty, its flower-like properties. There will be pages about some fair flower's qualities as food or medicine, but perhaps not a sentence about its significance to the eye (as if the cowslip were better for greens than for yellows), about what children and all flower-lovers gather flowers for. [The book I refer to should be] not addressed to the cook, or the physician, or the dyer merely, but to the lovers of flowers young and old, the most poetical of books in which is breathed man's love of flowers.

Do nothing merely out of good resolutions. Discipline yourself only to yield to love. Suffer yourself to be attracted. It is in vain to write on chosen themes. We must wait till they have kindled a flame in our minds. There must be the . . . generating force of love behind every

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effort destined to be successful. The cold resolve gives birth to, begets nothing. The theme that seeks me, not I, it. The poet's relation to his theme is the relation of lovers. It is no more to be courted. Obey, report.

Though they are cutting off the wood at Walden, it is not all loss. It makes some new and unexpected prospects. . . . As I stood on the partially cleared bank at the E. end of the pond, I looked S. over the side of the hill into a deep dell, still wooded, and saw not more than thirty rods off a chopper at his work. I was half a dozen rods distant from the standing wood, and I saw him through a vista between two trees. He appeared to me charmingly distinct as in a picture of which the two trees were the frame. He was seen against the snow on the hillside beyond. I could distinguish each part of his dress perfectly, and the axe with distinct outline, as he raised it above his head, the black iron against the snow. I could hear every stroke distinctly. Yet I should have deemed it ridiculous to call to him, he appeared so distant. He appeared with the same distinctness as objects seen through a pin hole in a card. This was the effect rather than what would have been by comparison of him, his size with the nearer trees between which I saw him, and which made the canopied roof of the grove far above his

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head. It was, perhaps, one of those coincidences and effects which have made men painters. I could not behold him as an actual man. He was more ideal than in any picture I have seen. He refused to be seen as actual; far in the hollow, yet somewhat enlightened aisles of this wooded dell. Some scenes will thus present themselves as picture, . . . subjects for the pencil, . . . distinctly marked. They do not require the aid of genius to idealize them. They must be seen as ideal. . . .

I am afraid to travel much, or to famous places, lest it might completely dissipate the mind. Then I am sure that what we observe at home, if we observe anything, is of more importance than what we observe abroad. The far-fetched is of the least value. What we observe in traveling are, to some extent, the accidents of the body; what we observe when sitting at home are, in the same proportion, phenomena of the mind itself. A wakeful night will yield as much thought as a long journey. If we try thoughts by their quality, not their quantity, I may find that a restless night will yield more than the longest journey. . . .

It is remarkable that there is no man so coarse and insensible but he can be profane, can pronounce the word "God" with emphasis in the woods when anything happens to disturb

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him, as a spoiled child loves to see what liberties he can presume to take. I am only astonished that B—— should think it any daring, that he should believe in God so much, look round to see if his auditors appreciated his boldness.

Jan. 30, 1854. Another cold morning. 13° below zero. . . . This morning, though not so cold by a degree or two as yesterday morning, the cold has got more into the house. . . . The sheets are frozen about the sleeper's face. The teamster's beard is white with ice. Last night I felt it stinging cold as I came up the street at nine o'clock. It bit my ears and face, but the stars shone all the brighter. The windows are all closed up with frost, as if they were of ground glass. . . . The snow is dry and squeaks under the feet, and the teams creak, as if they needed greasing, sounds associated with extremely cold weather.

P. M. Up river on ice and snow to Fair Haven Pond. . . . We look at every track in the snow. Every little while there is the track of a fox, may be the same one, across the river, turning aside sometimes to a muskrat's cabin or a point of ice where he has left some traces, and frequently the larger track of a hound which has followed his trail. . . . This road is so wide that you do not feel confined in it, and you never meet travelers with whom you have no sym-

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pathy. The winter, cold and bound out, as it is, is thrown to us like a bone to a famishing dog, and we are expected to get the marrow out of it. While the milkmen in the outskirts are milking so many scores of cows before sunrise these winter mornings, it is our task to milk the winter itself. It is true it is like a cow that is dry, and our fingers are numb, and there is none to wake us up. Some desert the fields, and go into winter quarters in the city. They attend the oratorios, while the only music we countrymen hear is the squeaking of the snow under our boots. But the winter was not given us for no purpose. We must thaw its cold with our genialness. We are tasked to find out and appropriate all the nutriment it yields. If it is a cold and hard season, its fruit no doubt is the more concentrated and nutty. It took the cold and bleakness of November to ripen the walnut, but the human brain is the kernel which the winter itself matures. Not till then does its shell come off. . . . Because the fruits of the earth are already ripe, we are not to suppose there is no fruit left for winter to ripen. . . . Then is the great harvest of the year, the harvest of thought. All previous harvests are stubble to this, mere fodder and green crop. Our oil is winter-strained. Now we burn with a purer flame like the stars. — Shall we take refuge in cities in November?

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Shall the nut fall green from the tree? Let not the year be disappointed of its crop. I knew a crazy man who walked into an empty pulpit one Sunday, and taking up a hymn book, remarked, "We have had a good fall for getting in corn and potatoes, let us sing Winter." So I say, "Let us sing winter." What else can we sing, and our voices be in harmony with the season? . . .

As we walked up the river, a little flock of chickadees, apparently, flew to us from a wood-side fifteen rods off, and uttered their lively *day day day*, and followed us along a considerable distance, flitting by our side on the button-bushes and willows. It is the most, if not the only, sociable bird we have.

Jan. 30, 1856. . . . What a difference between life in the city and life in the country at present! between walking in Washington Street, threading your way between countless sledges and travelers over the discolored snow, and crossing Walden Pond, a spotless field of snow surrounded by woods, whose intensely blue shadows and your own are the only objects. What a solemn silence reigns here!

Jan. 30, 1859. How peculiar is the hooting of an owl; not shrill and sharp like the scream of a hawk, but full, round, and sonorous, waking the echoes of the wood.

Jan. 30, 1860. 2 P. M. To Nut Meadow

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and White Pond road. Thermometer + 45°. Fair, with a few cumuli of indefinite outline in the N. and S., and dusky under sides. A gentle west wind and a blue haze. Thaws. . . . The ice has so melted on the meadows that I see where the muskrat has left his clamshells in a heap near the river side where there was a hollow in the bank. — The small water-bugs are gyrating abundantly in Nut Meadow Brook. It is pleasant also to see the very distinct ripple marks in the sand at the bottom, of late so rare a sight. I go through the piny field N. W. of Martial Miles's. There are no more beautiful natural parks than these pastures in which the white pines have sprung up spontaneously, standing at handsome intervals, where the wind chanced to let the seed lie at last, and the grass and blackberry vines have not yet been killed by them.

There are certain sounds invariably heard in warm and thawing days in winter, such as the crowing of cocks, the cawing of crows, and sometimes the gobbling of turkeys. The crow, flying high, touches the tympanum of the sky for us, and reveals the tone of it. What does it avail to look at a thermometer or barometer compared with listening to his note! He informs me that nature is in the tenderest mood possible, and I hear the very flutterings of her heart. — Crows

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have singularly wild and suspicious ways. You will see a couple flying high, as if about their business, but, lo, they turn and circle and caw over your head again and again for a mile, and this is their business, as if a mile and an afternoon were nothing for them to throw away; this even in winter when they have no nests to be anxious about. But it is affecting to hear them cawing about their ancient seat . . . which the choppers are laying low. . . .

The snow flea seems to be a creature whose summer and prime of life is a thaw in the winter. It seems not merely to enjoy this interval like other animals, but then chiefly to exist. It is the creature of the thaw. Moist snow is its element. That thaw which merely excites the cock to sound his clarion, as it were, calls to life the snow flea.

Jan. 31, 1852. . . . I am repeatedly astonished by the coolness and obtuse bigotry with which some will appropriate the New Testament in conversation with you. It is as if they were to appropriate the sun, and stand between you and it, because they understood you had walked once by moonlight, though that was in the reflected light of the sun which you could not get directly. I have seen two persons conversing at a tea-table, both lovers of the New Testament, each in his own way, the one a lover of all

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kindred expression of truth also, and yet the other appropriated the book wholly to herself, and took it for granted with singular or rather lamentable blindness and obtuseness that the former neither knew nor cared anything about it. Horace Greeley found some fault with me to the world, because I presumed to speak of the New Testament, using my own words and thoughts, and challenged me to a controversy. The one thought I had was that it would give me real pleasure to know that he loved it as sincerely and enlightenedly as I did. . . .

That work of man's must be vast indeed which, like the pyramids, looks blue in the horizon, as mountains. Few works of man rise high enough, and with breadth enough to be blued by the air between them and the spectator.

I hear my friend say, "I have lost my faith in men, there are none true, magnanimous, holy, etc., etc., meaning all the while that I do not possess those unattainable virtues. But, worm as I am, this is not wise in my friend, and I feel simply discouraged, so far as my relation to him is concerned. We must have infinite faith in each other. . . . He erects his want of faith as a barrier between us. When I hear a grown man or woman say, "Once I had faith in men, now I have not," I am inclined to ask, "Who are you whom the world has disappointed?

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Have not you rather disappointed the world? There is the same ground for faith now that ever there was. It needs only a little love in you who complain so, to ground it on." For my own part, I am thankful there are those who come so near being my friends that they can be estranged from me. I had faith before; they would destroy the little I have. The mason asks but a narrow shelf to spring his brick from; man requires only an infinitely narrower one to spring the arch of faith from. . . .

I am not sure that I have any right to address to you the words I am about to write. The reason I have not visited you oftener and more earnestly is that I am offended by your pride, your sometime assumption of dignity, your manners which come over me like waves of Lethe. I know that if I stood in that relation to you which you seem to ask, I should not be met. Perhaps I am wiser than you think. Do you never for an instant treat me as a thing, flatter me? You treat me with politeness and I make myself scarce. We have not sympathy enough, do not always apprehend each other. You talk too, too often, as if I were Mr. Tompkins of the firm of ——, a retired merchant. If I had never thought of you as a friend, I could make much use of you as an acquaintance. . . .

The value of the pitch pine in winter is that

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it holds the snow so finely. I see it now afar on the hillsides decking itself with it, its whited towers forming coverts where the rabbit and the gray squirrel lurk. It makes the most cheerful winter scenery, beheld from the window, you know so well the nature of the coverts and the sombre light it makes. The young oaks with their red leaves, covering so many acres, are also an indispensable feature of the winter landscape, and the limbs of oak woods where some of the trees have been cut off.

Jan. 31, 1854. P. M. To Great Meadows and Beck Stow's. The wind is more southerly, and now the warmth of the sun prevails and is felt on the back. The snow softens and melts. It is a beautiful, clear, and mild winter day. . . . But I do not melt. There is no thaw in me. I am bound out still. — I see the tree sparrows one or two at a time now and then all winter uttering a faint note, with their bright chestnut crown, and spot on breast, and barred wings. They represent the sparrows in winter. . . .

In winter when there are no flowers, and leaves are rare, even large buds are interesting and somewhat exciting. I go a budding like a partridge. I am always attracted at this season by the buds of the swamp pink, the poplars, and the sweet gale. . . .

We too have our thaws. They come to our

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January moods, when our ice cracks, and our sluices break loose. Thought that was frozen up under stern experience gushes forth in feeling and expression. This is a freshet which carries away dams of accumulated ice. Our thoughts hide unexpressed like the buds under the downy or resinous scales. They would hardly keep a partridge from starving. If you would know what are my winter thoughts look in the partridge's crop. They are like the laurel buds, some leaf, some blossom buds, which, though food for such indigenous creatures, will not expand into leaves and flowers until summer comes.

Jan. 31, 1855. A clear, cool, beautiful day; fine skating; an unprecedented expanse of ice. At 10 A. M. skated up the river to explore farther than I had been. . . . The country almost completely bare of snow, only some ice in the roads and fields, and the frozen freshet at this remarkable height. I skated up as far as the boundary between Wayland and Sudbury, just above Pelham's Pond, about twelve miles, between 10 A. M. and 1, quite leisurely. There I found the river open unexpectedly, as if there were a rapid there, and as I walked three quarters of a mile farther, it was still open before me. . . . All the way I skated there was a chain of meadows, with the muskrat houses still

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rising above the ice, commonly on the bank of the river, and marking it like smaller haycocks amid the large ones still left. — As I skated near the shore under Lee's Cliff, I saw what I took to be some scrags or knotty stubs of a dead limb, lying on the bank beneath a white oak, close by me. Yet while I looked closely at them, I could not but admire their close resemblance to partridges. I had come along with a rapid whir, and suddenly halted right against them, only two rods distant, and as my eyes watered a little from skating against the wind, I was not convinced they were birds, till I had pulled out my glass and deliberately examined them. They sat and stood, three of them, perfectly still, with their heads erect, some darker feathers, like ears methinks, increasing their resemblance to scrags, as where a small limb is broken off. I was much surprised at the remarkable stillness they preserved, instinctively relying on their resemblance to the ground for their protection, *i. e.*, withered grass, dry oak leaves, dead scrags, and broken twigs. . . . For some time after I had noted their resemblance to birds, standing only two rods off, I could not be sure of their character on account of their perfect motionlessness, and it was not till I brought my glass to bear on them, and distinctly saw their eyes steadily glaring on me and their

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necks and every muscle tense with anxiety, that I was convinced. At length, on some signal which I did not perceive, they went with a whir, as if shot off, over the bushes.

Feb. 1, 1852. When I hear that a friend on whom I relied has spoken of me, not with cold words, perhaps, but even with a cold and indifferent tone, to another, ah! what treachery I feel it to be! the crime of all crimes against humanity. My friend may cherish a thousand suspicions against me, and they may but represent his faith and expectation, till he cherishes them so heartlessly that he can speak of them.

If I have not succeeded in my friendships, it was because I demanded more of them, and did not put up with what I could get; and I got no more, partly because I gave so little. I must be dumb to those who do not, as I believe, appreciate my actions, not knowing the springs of them.

While we preach obedience to human laws, and to that portion of the divine laws set forth in the New Testament, the natural laws of genius, of love and friendship, we do not preach nor insist upon. How many a seeming heartlessness is to be explained by the very abundance of the heart. How much of seeming recklessness, even selfishness, is to be explained by obedience to this code of the divine laws.

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It is evident that as buyers and sellers we obey a very different law from what we do as lovers and friends. The Hindoo is not to be tried in all things by the Christian standard, nor the Christian by the Hindoo. How much fidelity to law of a kind not commonly recognized, how much magnanimity even may be thrown away on mankind, is like pearls cast before swine! The hero obeys his own law, the Christian, his, the lover and friend, theirs; they are to some extent different codes. What incessant tragedy between men when one silently obeys the code of friendship, the other, the code of philanthropy, in their dealings with one another. As our constitutions and geniuses are different, so are our standards, and we are amenable to different codes. My neighbor asks me in vain to be good as he is good. I must be good as I am made to be good, whether I am heathen or Christian. Every man's laws are hard enough to obey. The Christian falls as far short of obeying the heathen moral law as the heathen does. One of little faith looks for his rewards and punishments to the next world, and, despairing of this world, behaves accordingly in it; another thinks the present a worthy occasion and arena, sacrifices to it, and expects to hear sympathizing voices. The man who believes in another world and not in this is wont to put me

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off with Christianity. The present world in which we talk is of a little less value to him than the next world. So we are said to hope in proportion as we do not realize. It is all hope deferred. But one grain of realization, of instant life on which we stand, is equivalent to acres of the leaf of hope hammered out to gild our prospect. The former so qualifies the vision that it gilds all we look upon with the splendor of truth. We must meet the hero on heroic grounds. Some tribes inhabit the mountains. Some dwell on the plains. We discourage one another. We obey different laws.

My friends! my friends! It does not cheer me to see them. They but express their want of faith in me or in mankind. Their coldest, cruellest thought comes clothed in polite and easy spoken words at last. I am silent to their invitations, because I do not *feel* invited, and we have no reasons to give for what we do *not* do. One says, "Love me out of this mire." The other says, "Come out of it and be lovely."

Feb. 1, 1855. As I skated up the river yesterday, now here, now there, past the old kingdoms of my fancy, I was reminded of Landor's Richard the First. "I sailed along the realms of my family; on the right was England, on the left was France [on the right was Sudbury, on the left was Wayland]; little else

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could I discover than sterile eminences and extensive shoals. They fled behind me; so pass away generations; so shift and sink, and die away affections." "I debark in Sicily." [That was Tall's Island.] "I sail again, and within a day or two [hour or two] I behold, as the sun is setting, the solitary majesty of Crete [that was Nobscot surely], mother of a religion, it is said, that lived two thousand years. Onward, and many specks bubble up along the blue Ægean." These must have been the muskrat houses in the meadows. "Every one," I have no doubt, "the monument of a greater man [being?] than I am." The swelling river was belching on a high key from ten to eleven, quite a musical cracking, running like chain lightning of sound athwart my course. . . . As I passed, the ice forced up by the water on one side suddenly settled on another with a crash, and quite a lake was formed above the ice behind me, so that my successor two hours after, to his wonder and alarm, saw my tracks disappear on one side of it and come out on the other. My seat from time to time is the springy horizontal bough of some fallen tree which is frozen into the ice, some old maple that was blown over and retained some life a year after, in the water, covered with the great shaggy perforate parmelia. Lying flat I quench my thirst where the ice is melted

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about it, blowing aside the snow fleas. The great arundo in the Sudbury meadows was all level with the ice. There was a great bay of ice stretching up the Pantry, and up Larned Brook. I looked up a broad, glaring bay of ice at the last place which seemed to reach to the base of Nobscot and almost to the horizon. Some dead maple or oak saplings laid side by side made my bridges, by which I got on to the ice along the watery shore. It was a problem to get off, and another to get on, dry shod.

Feb. 1, 1857. 3 P. M. Down railroad. Thermometer at + 42°. Warm as it is, I see a large flock of snow buntings on the railroad causeway. Their wings are white above, next the body, but black or dark beyond, and on the back. This produces that regular black and white effect when they fly past you.

Feb. 1, 1858. Measured Gowing's swamp two and one half rods N. E. of the middle of the hole, *i. e.*, in the andromeda and sphagnum near its edge, where I stand in the summer; also five rods N. E. of the middle of the open hole, or in the midst of the andromeda. In both these places the pole went hard at first, but broke through a crust of roots and sphagnum at about three feet beneath the surface, and I then easily pushed it down just twenty feet. This being a small pole, I could not push

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it any farther, holding it by the small end. It bent then. With a longer and stiffer pole, I could probably have fathomed thirty feet. It seems then that there is over this andromeda swamp a crust about three feet thick of sphagnum, andromeda (*calyculata* and *Polifolia*), and *Kalmia glauca*, beneath which there is almost clear water, and under that an exceedingly thin mud. There can be no soil above the mud, and yet there are three or four larch trees three feet high or more between these holes, or over exactly the same water, and small spruce trees near by. For aught that appears, the swamp is as deep under the andromedas as in the middle. The two andromedas and the *Kalmia glauca* may be more truly said to grow in water than in soil there. When the surface of a swamp shakes for a rod around you, you may conclude that it is a network of roots two or three feet thick resting on water or very thin mud. The surface of that swamp, composed in great part of sphagnum, is really floating. It evidently begins with sphagnum which floats on the surface of clear water, and accumulating, at length affords a basis for that large-seeded sedge(?), andromeda, etc. The filling up of a swamp then, in this case at least, is not the result of a deposition of vegetable matter washed into it, settling to the bottom, and leaving the surface clear, so filling it up from

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the bottom to the top. But the vegetation first extends itself over it in a film which gradually thickens till it supports shrubs, and completely conceals the water. The under part of this crust drops to the bottom, so that it is filled up first at the top and bottom, and the middle part is the last to be reclaimed from the water. Perhaps this swamp is in the process of becoming peat. It has been partially drained by a ditch. — I fathomed also two rods within the edge of the blueberry bushes, in the path, but I could not force a pole down more than eight feet five inches, so it is much more solid there, and the blueberry bushes require a firmer soil than the water andromeda. — This is a regular *quag* or shaking surface, and in this way evidently floating islands are formed. I am not sure but that meadow, with all its bushes in it, would float a man-of-war.

Feb. 2, 1841. It is easy to repeat, but hard to originate. Nature is readily made to repeat herself in a thousand forms, and, in the daguerreotype, her own light is amanuensis. The picture, too, has more than a surface significance, a depth equal to the prospect, so that the microscope may be applied to the one, as the spy-glass to the other. Thus we may easily multiply the forms of the outward, but to give the within outwardness, that is not easy.

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That an impression may be taken, perfect stillness, though but for an instant, is necessary. There is something analogous in the birth of all rhymes.

Our sympathy is a gift whose value we can never know, nor when we impart it. The instant of communion is when, for the least point of time, we cease to oscillate and coincide in rest, by as fine a point as a star pierces the firmament. . . .

There is always a single ear in the audience to which we address ourselves.

How much does it concern you, the good opinion of your friend! Therein is the measure of fame. For the herd of men multiplied many times will never come up to the value of one friend. In this society there is no fame but love, for as our name may be on the lips of men, so are we in each other's hearts. There is no ambition but virtue, for why should we go round about who may go direct? . . .

For our aspirations there is no expression as yet, but if we obey steadily, by another year we shall have learned the language of last year's aspirations. . . .

Weight has something very imposing in it, for we cannot get rid of it. Once in the scales we must weigh. And are we not always in the scales, and weighing just our due, though we

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kick the beam, and do all we can to make ourselves heavier or lighter?

Feb. 2, 1853. The *Stellaria media* [common chickweed] is full of frost-bitten blossoms containing stamens, etc., still, and half-grown buds. Apparently it never rests.

Feb. 2, 1854. Up river on ice to Clematis Brook. Another warm, melting day, like yesterday. You can see some softening and relenting in the sky. Apparently the vapor in the air makes a grosser atmosphere more like that of a summer eve. We go up the Corner road and take the ice at Potter's meadow. The Cliff Hill is nearly bare on the west side, and you hear the rush of melted snow down its side in one place. Here and there are regular round holes in the ice over the meadow two or three feet in diameter where the water appears to be warmer, and where are springs, perchance. Therein in shallow water is seen the cress and one or two other plants still quite fresh. The shade of pines on the snow is in some lights quite blue. We stopped a while under Bittern Cliff, the south side, where it is very warm. There are a few greenish radical leaves to be seen, primrose, Johnswort, strawberry, etc., and spleenwort still green in the clefts. These sunny old gray rocks completely covered with white and gray lichens, and overrun with ivy,

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are a very cozy place. You hardly detect the melted snow swiftly trickling down them, until you feel the drops on your cheek. The winter gnat is seen in the air before the rocks. In their clefts are the latebræ of many insects, spiders, etc. . . .

The ice is eighteen inches thick on Fair Haven. Saw some pickerel just caught there with a fine lustre on them. — Went to the pond in the woods which has an old ditch dug from it near Clematis Brook. The red twigs of the cornel and the yellow ones of the sallows surrounding it are interesting at this season. We prize the least color now. As it is a melting day, the snow is everywhere peppered with snow fleas, even twenty rods from the woods, on the pond and meadows.

The scream of the jay is a true winter sound. It is wholly without sentiment, and in harmony with winter. — I stole up within five or six rods of a pitch pine behind which a downy woodpecker was pecking. From time to time he hopped round to the side towards me, and observed me without fear. They are very confident birds, not easily scared, but incline to keep the other side of the bough from you, perhaps.

Already we begin to anticipate spring, to say that the day is spring-like. This is an important difference between this time and a month ago.

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Is not January the hardest month to get through? When you have weathered that, you get into the gulf stream of winter, nearer the shores of spring.

Feb. 2, 1855. . . . This last half inch of snow which fell in the night is just enough to track animals on the ice by. All about the Hill and Rock I see the tracks of rabbits which have run back and forth close to the shore repeatedly since the night. In the case of the rabbit, the fore feet are farther apart than the hind ones, the first, four or five inches to the stride, the last, two or three. They are generally not quite regular, but one of the fore feet a little in advance of the other, and so with the hind feet. There is an interval of about sixteen inches between each four tracks. Sometimes they are in a curve or crescent, all touching.

I saw what must have been a muskrat's or mink's track, I think, since it came out of the water; the tracks roundish, and toes much rayed four or five inches apart on the trail, with only a trifle more between the fore and hind legs, and the mark of the tail in successive curves as it struck the ice. — Another track puzzled me, as if a hare had been running like a dog (— · . — · . — · . eighteen inches apart), and touched its tail, if it had one. This in several places.

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Feb. 2, 1858. . . . As I return from the post-office I hear the hoarse, robin-like chirp of a song sparrow, . . . and see him perched on the top-most twig of a heap of brush, looking forlorn, and drabbled, and solitary in the rain.

Feb. 2, 1860. 6° below at about 8 A. M. . . . 2 P. M. to Fair Haven Pond. The river, which was breaking up, is frozen over again. The new ice over the channel is of a yellow tinge, and is covered with handsome rosettes two or three inches in diameter where the vapor which rose through, froze and crystallized. This new ice for forty rods together is thickly covered with these rosettes, often as thick as snow, an inch deep. . . . The frozen breath of the river at a myriad breathing holes. . . .

It is remarkable that the straw-colored sedge of the meadows, which in the fall is one of the least noticeable colors, should now, that the landscape is mostly covered with snow, be perhaps the most noticeable of all objects in it for its color, and an agreeable contrast to the snow. . . .

I see where some meadow mouse (if not mole) just came to the surface of the snow, enough to break it with his back for three or four inches, then put his head out, and at once withdrew it.

We walked as usual on the fresh track of a

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fox, peculiarly pointed, and sometimes the mark of two toe-nails in front separate from the track of the foot in very thin snow. As we were kindling a fire on the pond by the side of the island, we saw the fox himself at the inlet of the river. He was busily examining along the sides of the pond by the button-bushes and willows, smelling in the snow. Not appearing to regard us much, he slowly explored along the shore of the pond thus half way round it; at Pleasant Meadow evidently looking for mice (or moles?) in the grass of the bank, smelling in the shallow snow there, amid the stubble, often retracing his steps, and pausing at particular spots. He was eagerly searching for food, intent on finding some mouse to help fill his empty stomach. He had a blackish tail and blackish feet, looked lean, and stood high. The tail peculiarly large for any creature to carry round. He stepped daintily about, softly, and is more to the manor born than a dog. It was a very arctic scene this cold day, and I suppose he would hardly have ventured out in a warm one. — The fox seems to get his living by industry and perseverance. He runs smelling for miles along the most favorable routes, especially the edge of rivers and ponds, till he smells the track of a mouse beneath the snow, or the fresh track of a partridge, and then follows it till he comes

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upon his game. . . . There may be a dozen partridges resting in the snow within a square mile, and his work is simply to find them with the end of his nose. Compared with the dog he affects me as high-bred, unmixed. There is nothing of the mongrel in him. He belongs to a noble family which has seen its best days, a younger son. Now and then he starts, and turns, and doubles on his track, as if he heard or scented danger. (I watch him through my glass.) He does not mind us at the distance of only sixty rods. I have myself seen to-day one place where a mouse came to the surface in the snow. Probably he has smelled out many such galleries. Perhaps he seizes them through the snow. — I had a transient vision of one mouse this winter, and that the first for a number of years.

Feb. 3, 1841. The present seems never to get its due. It is the least obvious, neither before nor behind, but within us. All the past plays into this moment, and we are what we are. My aspiration is one thing, my reflection, another; but, over all, myself and condition — is and does. To men and nature I am each moment a finished tool, — a spade, a barrow, a pickaxe. This immense promise is no *efficient* quality. For all practical purposes I am done. . . .

We are constantly invited to be what we are,

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as to something worthy and noble. I never waited but for myself to come round; none ever detained me, but I lagged or staggered after myself.

It steads us to be as true to children and boors, as to God himself. It is the only attitude which will meet all occasions. It only will make the earth yield her increase, — and by it do we effectually expostulate with the wind. If I run against a post, this is the remedy.

I would meet the morning and evening on very sincere ground. When the sun introduces me to a new day, I silently say to myself, "Let us be faithful all round. We will do justice and receive it." Something like this is the secret charm of Nature's demeanor towards us, strict conscientiousness, and disregard of us when we have ceased to have regard for ourselves. So she can never offend us. How true she is, and never swerves. In her most genial moment, her laws are as steadfastly and relentlessly fulfilled (though the decalogue is rhymed and set to sweetest music), as in her sternest.

Any exhibition of affection, as an inadvertent word, or act, or look, seems premature, as if the time were not ripe for it, like the buds which the warm days near the end of winter cause to push out and unfold before the frosts are yet gone.

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My life must seem as if it were passing on a higher level than that which I occupy. It must possess a dignity which will not allow me to be familiar.

Feb. 3, 1852. When I review the list of my acquaintances from the most impartial point of view, and consider each one's excesses and defects of character which are the subject of mutual ridicule and astonishment and pity (and I class myself among them), I cannot help asking myself, "If this is the sane world, what must a mad-house be?" It is only by a certain flattery, and an ignoring of their faults, that even the best are made available for society.

I have been to the libraries (yesterday) at Cambridge and Boston. It would seem as if all things compelled us to originality. How happens it that I find not in the country, in the fields and woods, the works even of like-minded naturalists and poets. Those who have expressed the purest and deepest love of nature have not recorded it on the bark of the trees with the lichens, they have left no memento of it there; but if I would read their books, I must go to the city, so strange and repulsive both to them and to me, and deal with men and institutions with whom I have no sympathy. When I have just been there on this errand, it seems too great a price to pay even for access to the works

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of Homer or Chaucer or Linnæus. Greece and Asia Minor should henceforth bear Iliads and Odysseys, as their trees lichens. But, no; if the works of nature are, to any extent, collected in the forest, the works of men are, to a still greater extent, collected in the city. I have sometimes imagined a library, *i. e.*, a collection of the works of true poets, philosophers, naturalists, etc., deposited not in a brick or marble edifice in a crowded and dusty city, guarded by cold-blooded and methodical officials, and preyed on by bookworms, in which you own no share, and are not likely to, but rather far away in the depths of a primitive forest, like the ruins of Central America, where you could trace a series of crumbling alcoves, the older books protecting the more modern from the elements, partially buried by the luxuriance of nature, which the heroic student could only reach after adventures in the wilderness amid wild beasts and wild men. That, to my imagination, seems a fitter place for these interesting relics which owe no small part of their interest to their antiquity, and whose occasion is nature, than the well-preserved edifice, with its well-preserved officials, on the side of a city's square. More terrible than lions and tigers, these Cerberuses. Access to nature for original observation is secured by one ticket, by one kind of expense; but access to the

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works of your predecessors, by a very different kind of expense. All things tend to cherish the originality of the original. Nature, at least, takes no pains to introduce him to the works of his predecessors, but only presents him with her own *opera omnia.* Is it the lover of nature who has access to all that has been written on the subject of his favorite studies? No; he lives far away from this. It is the lover of books and systems who knows nature chiefly at second hand. . . .

About 6 P. M. walked to Cliffs *via* railroad. Snow quite deep. The sun had set without a cloud in the sky; a rare occurrence, but I missed the clouds which make the glory of evening. The sky must have a few clouds, as the mind a few moods; nor is the evening less serene for them. There is only a tinge of red along the horizon. The moon is nearly full to-night, and the moment is passed when the light in the east (*i. e.*, of the moon) balances the light in the west. . . . It is perfectly still, and not very cold. The shadows of the trees on the snow are more minutely distinct than at any other season, not dark masses merely, but finely reticulated, each limb and twig represented, as cannot be in summer both from the leaves and the inequality and darkness of the ground. . . . I hear my old acquaintance, the owl, from the causeway. The reflector of

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the cars, as I stand over the Deep Cut, makes a large and dazzling light in this air, . . . and now whizzes the boiling, sizzling kettle by me, in which the passengers make me think of potatoes which a fork would show to be done by this time. The steam is denser for the cold, and more white; like the purest downy clouds in the summer sky its volumes roll up between me and the moon, and far behind, when the cars are a mile off, it still goes shading the fields with its wreaths, the breath of the panting traveler. I now cross from the railroad to the road. This snow, the last of which fell day before yesterday, is two feet deep, pure and powdery. . . . From a myriad little crystal mirrors the moon is reflected, which is the untarnished sparkle of its surface. I hear a gentle rustling of the oak leaves as I go through the woods, but this snow has yet no troops of leaves on its surface The snow evidently by its smooth crust assists in the more equal dispersion and distribution of the leaves which course over it, blown by the wind. Perchance, for this reason, the oak leaves and some others hang on. . . .

[On Fair Haven Hill.] Instead of the sound of his [the chopper's] axe, I hear the hooting of an owl, *nocturnus ululatus*, whose haunts he is laying waste. The ground is all pure white, powdery snow, which his sled, etc., has stirred

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up, except the scattered twigs and pine plumes. I can see every track distinctly where the teamster drove his oxen and loaded his sled, and even the tracks of his dog, in the moonlight, and plainly to write this. — The moonlight now is very splendid in the untouched pine woods above the Cliffs, alternate patches of shade and light. The light has almost the brightness of sunlight, the fulgor. The stems of the trees are more obvious than by day, being simple black against the moonlight and the snow. The sough of the breeze in the pine tops sounds far away like the surf on a distant shore, and for all sound beside, there is only the rattling or chafing of little dry twigs, perchance a little snow falling on them, or they are so brittle that they break and fall with the motion of the trees. — My owl sounds hoo-hoo-hoo — hoo.

The landscape covered with snow seen from these Cliffs, encased in snowy armor two feet thick, gleaming in the moonlight and of spotless white, who can believe that this is the habitable globe. The scenery is wholly arctic. Fair Haven Pond is a Baffin's Bay. Man must have ascertained the limits of the winter before he ventured to withstand it, and not migrate with the birds. No cultivated field, no house, no candle. All is as dreary as the shores of the frozen ocean. I can tell where there is wood

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and where open land for many miles in the horizon by the darkness of the former and whiteness of the latter. . . . It looks as if the snow and ice of the arctic world, traveling like a glacier, had crept down southward and overwhelmed New England. See if a man can think his summer thoughts now. — But the evening star is preparing to set, and I will return, floundering through snow, sometimes up to my middle. . . .

The forcible writer stands bodily behind his words with his experience. He does not make books out of books, but he has been *there* in person. . . .

That is a good mythological incident told of the wounded farmer who, his foot being lacerated and held fast between his plow and a fallen tree in a forest clearing, drew his oxen to him with difficulty, smeared their horns with blood which the mosquitoes had drawn from his bare arms, and cutting the reins, sent them home as an advertisement to his family.

Feb. 3, 1854. . . . Varro speaks of two kinds of pigeons, one of which was wont to alight on the (*Columinibus villæ*) columns of a villa (*a quo appellatæ columbæ*), from which they were called "*Columbæ.*" These, on account of their natural timidity (*summa loca in tectis captant*), delight in the highest places on the roofs (or under cover)?

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Feb. 3, 1855. . . . Skated up the river with T——n in spite of the snow and wind. . . . We went up the Pantry meadow . . . and came down . . . again with the wind and snow dust, spreading our coat tails, like birds, though somewhat at the risk of our necks, if we had struck a foul place. I found that I could sail on a tack pretty well, trimming with my skirts. Sometimes we had to jump suddenly over some obstacle, which the snow had concealed, to save our necks. It was worth the while for one to look back against the sun and wind, and see the other sixty rods off, . . . floating down like a graceful demon in the midst of the broad meadow, all covered and lit with the curling snow steam, between which you saw the ice in dark, waving streaks, like a mighty river Orellana braided of a myriad steaming currents; like the demon of the storm driving his flocks and herds before him. In the midst of this tide of curling snow steam, he sweeps and surges this way and that, and comes on like the spirit of the whirlwind. At Lee's Cliff we made a fire, kindling with white pine cones, after oak leaves and twigs, else we had lost it. The cones saved us, for there is a resinous drop at the point of each scale. There we forgot that we were out doors in a blustering winter day. Flash go your dry leaves like powder, and leave a few

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bare and smoking twigs. Then you sedulously feed a little flame until the fire takes hold of the solid wood and establishes itself. What an uncertain and negative thing is fire when it finds nothing to suit its appetite after the first flash. What a positive and inexpugnable thing, when it begins to devour the solid wood with a relish, burning with its own wind. You must think as long at last how to put it out as you did how to kindle it. Close up under some upright rock where you scorch the yellow sulphur lichens. Then cast on some creeping juniper wreaths or hemlock boughs to hear them crackle, realizing scripture.

Some little boys ten years old are as handsome skaters as I know. They sweep along with a graceful, floating motion, leaning now to this side, then to that, like a marsh hawk beating the bush. . . .

I still recur in my mind to that skating tour of the 31st. I was thus enabled to get a bird's-eye view of the river, to survey its length and breadth within a few hours, connect one part or shore with another in my mind, and realize what was going on upon it from end to end, to know the whole, as I ordinarily knew a few miles of it only. I connected the chestnut-tree house near the shore in Wayland with the chimney house in Billerica, Pelham's Pond with

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Nutting's Pond in Billerica. There is good skating from the mouth to Saxonville, measureing in a straight line some twenty-two miles, by the river say thirty now. It is all the way of one character, a meadow river, or dead stream. Musketicook, the abode of muskrats, pickerel, etc., crossed within these dozen miles each way, or thirty in all, by some twenty low wooden bridges, *sublicii pontes*, connected with the mainland by willowy causeways. Thus the long shallow lakes are divided into reaches. These long causeways all under water and ice now, only the bridges peeping out from time to time, like a dry eyelid. You must look close to find them in many cases, mere islands are they to the traveler in this waste of water and ice. Only two villages lying near the river, Concord and Wayland, and one at each end of this thirty miles. . . . I used some bits of wood with a groove in them for crossing the causeways and gravelly places, that I might not scratch my skate irons.

Feb. 3, 1856. . . . P. M. Up North Branch. A strong N. W. wind (and thermometer 11°) driving the snow like steam. About five inches of soft snow now on ice. . . . Returning, saw near the Island a shrike glide by, cold and blustering as it was, with a remarkably even and steady sail or gliding motion, like a hawk, eight

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or ten feet above the ground, and alight on a tree from which, at the same instant, a small bird, perhaps a creeper or nuthatch, flitted timidly away. The shrike was apparently in pursuit.

We go wading through snow now up the bleak river, in the face of a cutting N. W. wind and driving snow-storm, turning now this ear, now that, to the wind, our gloved hands in our bosoms or our pockets. How different this from sailing or paddling up the stream here in July, or poling amid the rocks! Yet still, in one square rod where they have got out ice and a thin transparent covering has formed, I can see the pebbly bottom as in summer.

There comes a deep snow in midwinter covering up the ordinary food of many birds and quadrupeds, but anon a high wind scatters the seeds of pines, hemlocks, birches, alders, etc., far and wide over the surface of the snow, for them.

You may now observe plainly the habit of the rabbits to run in paths about the swamps.

Mr. Emerson, who returned last week from lecturing, on the Mississippi, having been gone but a month, tells me that he saw boys skating on the Mississippi, and on Lake Erie, and on the Hudson, and has no doubt they are skating on Lake Superior. Probably at Boston he might have seen them skating on the Atlantic.

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In Barber's "Historical Collections," p. 476, there is a letter by Cotton Mather dated "Boston, 10th Dec., 1717," describing the great snow of the preceding February, from which I quote: "On the twentieth of the last February there came on a snow, which being added unto what had covered the ground a few days before, made a thicker mantle for our mother than what was usual. And the storm with it was, for the following day, so violent as to make all communication between the neighbors everywhere to cease. People, for some hours, could not pass from one side of a street to another."

"On the twenty-fourth day of the month came Pelion upon Ossa. Another snow came on, which almost buried the memory of the former, with a storm so famous that Heaven laid an interdict on the religious assemblies throughout the country on the Lord's day, the like whereunto had never been seen before. The Indians near an hundred years old affirm that their fathers never told them of anything that equaled it. Vast numbers of cattle were destroyed in this calamity, whereof some there were of the stranger [stronger?] sort, were found standing dead on their legs, as if they had been alive, many weeks after when the snow melted away. And others had their eyes glazed over with ice at such a rate, that being

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not far from the sea, their mistake of their way drowned them there. One gentleman on whose farms were lost above eleven hundred sheep, which with other cattle, were interred (shall I say) or innived in the snow, writes me word that there were two sheep very singularly circumstanced. For, no less than eight and twenty days after the storm, the people pulling out the ruins of above an hundred sheep out of a snow bank which lay sixteen foot high drifted over them, there was two found alive which had been there all this time, and kept themselves alive by eating the wool of their dead companions. When they were taken out, they shed their own fleeces, but soon got into good case again."

"A man had a couple of young hogs which he gave over for dead, but on the twenty-seventh day after their burial, they made their way out of a snow bank, at the bottom of which they had found a little tansy to feed upon." "Hens were found alive after seven days; turkeys were found alive after five and twenty days, buried in the snow, and at a distance from the ground, and altogether destitute of anything to feed them." — "The wild creatures of the woods, [at] the outgoing of the evening, made their descent as well as they could in this time of scarcity for them, towards the sea-side. A vast multitude of deer, for the same cause, taking

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the same course, and the deep snow spoiling them of their only defense, which is to run, they became such a prey to these devourers that it is thought not one in twenty escaped." — "It is incredible how much damage is done to the orchards, for the snow freezing to a crust as high as the bows of the trees, anon split them to pieces. The cattle, also, walking on the crusted snow a dozen feet from the ground, so fed upon the trees as very much to damnify them." "Cottages were totally covered with the snow, and not the very tops of their chimneys to be seen." These "odd accidents," he says, "would afford a story. But there not being any relation to Philosophy in them, I forbear them." He little thought that his simple testimony to such facts as the above would be worth all the philosophy he might dream of.

Feb. 3, 1857. To Fitchburg to lecture. — Though the snow was not deep, I noticed that an unbroken snow crust stretched around Fitchburg; and its several thousand inhabitants had been confined so long to the narrow streets, some of them a track only six feet wide. Hardly one individual had anywhere departed from this narrow walk, and struck out into the surrounding fields and hills. If I had had my cowhide boots, I should not have confined myself to those narrow limits, but have climbed some of the hills.

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It is surprising to go into a N. E. town in mid-winter and find its five thousand inhabitants all living thus on the limits, confined at most to their narrow moose-yard in the snow. Scarcely here and there has a citizen stepped aside one foot to let a sled pass. And about as circumscribed is their summer life, going out from house to shop, and back to house again. If, Indian-like, one examined the dew or beaded grass, he would be surprised to discover how little trodden or frequented the surrounding fields were. . . . It is as if some vigilance committee had given notice that if any should transgress these narrow limits, he should be outlawed and his blood should be upon his own head.

Feb. 3, 1858. . . . I do not see this year, and I do not know that I ever have seen, any unseasonable swelling of the buds of *indigenous* plants in mild winters.

Feb. 3, 1859. Five minutes before 3 P. M. father died. . . . I have touched a body which was flexible and warm, yet tenantless — warmed by what fire? When the spirit that animated some matter has left it, who else, what else, can animate it?

How enduring are our bodies after all! The forms of our brothers and sisters, our parents and children and wives, lie still in the hills and fields round about us, not to mention those of

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our remoter ancestors, and the matter which composed the body of our first human father still exists under another name.

When in sickness the body is emaciated, and the expression of the face in various ways is changed, you perceive unexpected resemblances to other members of the same family, as if within the same family there was a greater general similarity in the framework of the face than in its filling up and clothing. . . .

Some have spoken slightingly of the Indians, as a race possessing so little skill and wit, so low in the scale of humanity, and so brutish that they hardly deserved to be remembered, using only the terms, miserable, wretched, pitiful, and the like. In writing their histories of this country, they have so hastily disposed of this refuse of humanity (as they might have called it), which littered and defiled the shore and the interior. But even the indigenous animals are inexhaustibly interesting to us. How much more then the indigenous men of America! If wild men, so much more like ourselves than they are unlike, have inhabited these shores before us, we wish to know particularly what manner of men they were, how they lived here, their relation to nature, their arts and their customs, their fancies and superstitions. They paddled over these waters, they wandered in

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these woods, and they had their fancies and beliefs connected with the sea and the forest, which concern us quite as much as the fables of Oriental nations do. It frequently happens that the historian, though he professes more humanity than the trapper, the mountain man, or gold digger, who shoots one as a wild beast, in reality exhibits and practices a similar inhumanity to his, wielding a pen instead of a rifle. — One tells you with more contempt than pity that the Indian has no religion, holding up both hands, and this to all the shallow-brained and bigoted seems to mean something important. But it is a distinction without a difference. Pray how much more religion has the historian? If —— knows so much more about God than another, if he has made some discovery of truth in this direction, I would thank him to publish it in "Silliman's Journal," with as few flourishes as possible. It is the spirit of humanity, that which animates both so-called savages and civilized nations, working through a man, and not the man expressing himself, that interests us most. The thought of a so-called savage tribe is generally far more just than that of a single civilized man.

I perceive that we partially die ourselves, through sympathy, at the death of each of our friends or near relatives. Each such experience

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is an assault on our vital force. It becomes a source of wonder that they who have lost many friends still live. After long watching around the sick-bed of a friend, we too partially give up the ghost with him, and are the less to be identified with this state of things.

The writer must, to some extent, inspire himself. Most of the sentences may at first be dead in his essay, but when all are arranged, some life and color will be reflected on them from the mature and successful lines. They will appear to pulsate with past life, and he will be enabled to eke out their slumbering sense, and make them worthy of their neighborhood. In his first essay on a given theme, he produces scarcely more than a frame and ground-work for his sentiment and poetry. Each clear thought that he attains to, draws in its train many kindred thoughts or perceptions. The writer has much to do even to create a theme for himself. Most that is first written on any subject is a mere groping after it, mere rubble-stone and foundation. It is only when many observations of different periods have been brought together that he begins to grasp his subject, and can make one pertinent and just observation.

Feb. 3, 1860. . . . When I read some of the rules for speaking and writing the English language correctly, as that a sentence must never

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end with a particle, and perceive how implicitly even the learned obey it, I think

> Any fool can make a rule,
> And every fool will mind it.

Feb. 4, 1841. . . . Music can make the most nervous chord vibrate healthily. . . .

Wait till you can be genuinely polite, though it be till doomsday, and not lose your chance everlastingly by a cowardly yielding to young etiquette. . . .

Not only by his cunning hand and brain, but when he speaks, too, does man assert his superiority. He conquers the spaces with his voice as well as the lion. The voice of a strong man modulated to the cadence of some tune is more imposing than any natural sound. The keeper's is the most commanding voice in the menagerie, and is heard over all its din. A strong, musical voice imposes a new order and harmony upon nature. From it as a centre, a law is promulgated to the universe. What it lacks in volume and loudness may always be made up in musical expression and distinctness. The brute growls to secure obedience, he threatens; the man speaks as if obedience were already secured.

Feb. 4, 1852. A mild, thawy day. The needles of the pine are the touchstone for the air. Any change in that element is revealed to the practiced eye by their livelier green or increased

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motion. They are the tell-tales. Now they are (the white pine) a cadaverous, misty blue, anon a lively . . . light plays on them, and they seem to erect themselves unusually, while the pitch pines are a brighter yellowish green than usual. The sun loves to nestle in the boughs of the pine and pass rays through them. — The scent of bruised pine leaves where a sled has passed is a little exciting to me now.

I saw this afternoon such lively, blood-red colors on a white pine stump recently cut, that at first I thought the chopper had cut himself. The heart of the tree was partly decayed, and here and there the sounder parts were of this vermilion (?) color alternating with the ordinary white of the wood where it was apparently in the earlier stages of decay. The color was livelier for being wet with the melting snow.

Feb. 4, 1854. . . . We have not much that is poetic in the accompaniments of the farmer's life. Varro speaks of the swineherd as accustoming the swine or boars to come at the sound of a horn when he fed them with acorns. I remember that my grandmother used to call her cow home at evening from a near pasture to be milked by thumping on the mortar which held her salt. The tinkling cow-bell cannot be spared. Even what most attracts us in the farmer's life is not its profitableness. We love to go after the

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cow not for the sake of her milk or her beef, or the money they yield, but perchance to hear the tinkling of the cow-bell. . . . We would keep hens not for eggs, but to hear the cocks crow and the hens cackle.

As for the locality of bee-hives, Varro says they must be placed near the villa, "potissimum ubi non resonent imagines, hic enim sonus harum fugæ causa existimatur esse," especially where there are no echoes, "for this sound is thought to be the cause of their flight."

Feb. 4, 1855. . . . Saw this P. M. a very distinct otter track by the Rock, at the junction of the two rivers. The separate foot tracks were quite round, more than two inches in diameter, showing the five toes distinctly in the snow, which was about half an inch deep. In one place where it had crossed last night to Merrick's pasture, its trail about six inches wide and of furrows in the snow was on one side of its foot tracks, and there were about nine inches between its fore and hind feet. Close by the great aspen I saw where it had entered or come out of the water under a shelf of ice left adhering to a maple. There it apparently played or slid on the level ice, making a broad trail, as if a shovel had been shoved along, just eight inches wide, without a foot track in it for four feet or more. And again the trail was only two inches wide and

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between the foot tracks, which were side by side and twenty-two inches apart. . . . About the edge of the hole, where the snow was all rubbed off, was something white which looked and smelt exactly like bits of the skin of pouts or eels. Minott tells of one shot once while eating an eel. Vance saw one this winter in this town eating fish by a brook. . . .

Feb. 4, 1857. I sometimes hear a prominent, but dull-witted worthy man say, or hear that he has said rarely, that if it were not for his firm belief in "an overruling power," or "a perfect Being," etc. But such poverty-stricken expressions only convince me of his habitual doubt, and that he is surprised into a transient belief. Such a man's expression of faith, moving solemnly in the traditional furrow, and casting out all free-thinking and living souls with the rusty mould-board of his compassion or contempt, thinking that he has Moses and all the prophets in his wake, discourages and saddens me as an expression of his narrow and barren want of faith. I see that the infidels and skeptics have formed themselves into churches, and weekly gather together at the ringing of a bell. Sometimes when in conversation or a lecture, I have been grasping at, or even standing and reclining upon the serene and everlasting truths that underlie and support our vacillating life, I have seen

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my auditors standing on their terra firma, the quaking earth, crowded together on their Lisbon Quay, and compassionately or timidly watching my motions as if they were the antics of a rope-dancer or mountebank pretending to walk on air.

Feb. 4, 1858. P. M. To C. Miles swamp. Discover the *Ledum latifolium* quite abundant on a space about six rods in diameter just E. of the small pond-hole, growing with the *Andromeda calyculata*, [*A.*] *Polifolia*, *Kalmia glauca*, etc. . . . The ledum bears a general resemblance to the water andromeda, with its dark-reddish, purplish, or rather mulberry leaves, reflexed; but nearer, it is distinguished by its coarseness, the perfect tent form of its upper leaves, and the large, conspicuous, terminal, roundish (strictly oval) red buds, nearly as big as the swamp pink's, but rounded. The woolly stem for a couple of inches beneath the bud is frequently bare, and conspicuously club-shaped. The rust on the under sides of the leaves is of a lighter color than that of Maine. The seed vessels, which open at the base first, still hold on. The plant might be easily confounded with the water andromeda by a careless observer. . . .

I brought some home, and had a cup of tea made of it, which, in spite of a slight piny or turpentine flavor, seemed unexpectedly good. . . . As usual with the finding of new plants, I had a

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presentiment that I should find the ledum in Concord. It is a remarkable fact that in the case of the most interesting plants which I have discovered in this vicinity, I have anticipated finding them perhaps a year before the discovery.

Feb. 5, 1841. . . . Music is the crystallization of sound. There is something in the effect of a harmonious voice upon the disposition of its neighborhood analogous to the law of crystals. It centralizes itself, and sounds like the published law of things. If the law of the universe were to be audibly promulgated, no mortal lawgiver would suspect it, for it would be a finer melody than his ears ever attended to. It would be sphere music. . . .

In all emergencies there is always one step which you may take on firm ground, where gravity will assure your footing. So you hold a draft on Fate payable at sight.

Feb. 5, 1852. . . . Men do believe in symbols yet and can understand some. When Sir Francis Head left his government in Upper Canada, and the usual farewell had been said, as the vessel moved off, he, standing on the deck, pointed, for all reply, to the British flag floating over his head, and a shriek rather than a cheer went up from the crowd on the piers who had observed his gesture. . . .

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Time never passes so rapidly and unaccountably as when I am engaged in recording my thoughts. The world may perchance reach its end for us in a profounder thought, and time itself run down.

Feb. 5, 1853. . . . The frost is out of the ground in many places. A *Stellaria media* [common chickweed] in blossom in the garden, as was the case, of course, last month.

Feb. 5, 1854. . . . Shall we not have sympathy with the muskrat, which gnaws its third leg off, not as pitying its suffering, but through our kindred mortality, appreciating its majestic pains and its heroic virtue? Are we not made its brothers by fate? For whom are psalms sung and mass said, if not for such worthies as these? When I hear the church organ peal, or feel the trembling tones of the bass-viol, I see in imagination the muskrat gnawing off his leg. I offer up a note that his affliction may be sanctified to each and all of us. . . . When I think of the tragedies which are constantly permitted in the course of all animal life, they make the plaintive strain of the universal harp which elevates us above the trivial. . . . Even as the worthies of mankind are said to recommend human life by having lived it, so I could not spare the example of the muskrat.

Feb. 5, 1859. When we have experienced

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many disappointments, such as the loss of friends, the notes of birds cease to affect us as they did.

Feb. 6, 1841. One may discover a new side to his most intimate friend when for the first time he hears him speak in public. He will be strange to him as he is more familiar to the audience. The longest intimacy could not foretell how he would behave then. When I observe my friend's conduct toward others, then chiefly I learn the traits in his character, and in each case I am unprepared for the issue. . . . How little do we know each other. Who can tell how his friend would behave on any occasion. . . .

What I am must make you forget what I wear. The fashionable world is content to be eclipsed by its dress, and never will bear the contrast. . . .

Lu ral lu ral lu — may be more impressively sung than very respectable wisdom talked. It is well timed, as wisdom is not always.

Feb. 6, 1852. . . . The artificial system has been very properly called the dictionary, and the natural method, the grammar of the science of botany, by botanists themselves. But are we to have nothing but grammars and dictionaries of this literature? Are there no works written in the language of flowers? I asked a learned and accurate naturalist, who is at the same time the courteous guardian of a public library, to

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direct me to those works which contained the more . . . popular account or biography of particular flowers from which the botanies I had met with appeared to draw sparingly, for I trusted that each flower had had many lovers and faithful describers in past times. But he informed me that I had read all, that no one was acquainted with them, they were only catalogued like his books. . . .

Who will not confess that the necessity to get money has helped to ripen some of his schemes?

Feb. 6, 1853. Observed some buds on a young apple-tree partially unfolded at the extremity and apparently swollen. Probably blossom buds.

Feb. 6, 1855. The coldest morning this winter. Our thermometer stands at —14° at 9 A. M. Others, we hear, at 6 A. M. stood at —18°. There are no loiterers in the street, and the wheels of wagons squeak as they have not for a long time, actually shriek. Frostwork keeps its place on the window within three feet of the stove all day in my chamber. At 4 P. M., the thermometer is at —10°. At six it is at —14°. I was walking at five, and found it stinging cold. . . . When I look out at the chimneys, I see that the cold and hungry air snaps up the smoke at once. The smoke is clear and light colored, and does not get far into the air before it is dissipated(?), condensed. The setting sun no

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sooner leaves our west windows than a solid, but beautiful crystallization coats them, except, it may be, a triangularish bare spot at one corner which, perhaps, the sun has warmed and dried. . . . A solid, sparkling field in the midst of each pane, with broad, flowing sheaves surrounding it. It has been a very mild as well as open winter up to this. At 9 o'clock P. M., thermometer at —16°. They say it did not rise above —6° to-day.

Feb. 7, 1855. The coldest night for a long, long time. Sheets froze stiff about the face. . . . People dreaded to go to bed. The ground cracked in the night as if a powder-mill had blown up, and the timbers of the house also. My pail of water was frozen in the morning so that I could not break it. . . . Iron was like fire in the hands. [Mercury ?] at about 7.30 A. M. gone into the bulb of the thermometer —19° at least. . . . Bread, meat, milk, cheese, etc., all frozen. . . . The inside of your cellar door all covered and sparkling with frost like Golconda. The latches are white with frost, and every nail-head in entries, etc., has a white head. . . . Neighbor Smith's thermometer stood at —26° early this morning. But the day is at length more moderate than yesterday. . . . This will be remembered as the cold Tuesday. The old folks still refer to the cold Friday, when they

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sat before great fires of wood four feet long, with a fence of blankets behind them, and water froze on the mantel-piece.

Feb. 7, 1838. Zeno, the Stoic, stood in precisely the same relation to the world that I do now. He is forsooth bred a merchant, as how many still, and can trade, and barter, and perhaps higgle, and moreover he can be shipwrecked and cast ashore at the Piræus, like one of your Johns or Thomases. He strolls into a shop, and is charmed by a book, by Xenophon, and straightway he becomes a philosopher. The sun of a new life's day rises to him serene and unclouded, which looks over στοὰ. And still the fleshly Zeno sails on, shipwrecked, buffeted, tempest-tossed, but the true Zeno sails over a placid sea. Play high, play low, rain, sleet, or snow, it 's all the same with the stoic. . . . When evening comes, he sits down unwearied to the review of his day, what 's done that 's to be undone, what not done at all still to be done; himself Truth's unconcerned helpmate. Another system of book-keeping this, then, that the Cyprian trader to Phœnicia practiced.

This was he who said to a certain garrulous young man, "On this account have we two ears and but one mouth, that we may hear more, and speak less." . . . The wisest may apologize that he only said so to hear himself talk, for if he

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heard not, as well for him had he never spoken. What is all this gabble to the gabbler? Only the silent reap the profit of it.

Feb. 7, 1841. . . . There would be a new year's gift, indeed, if we would bestow on each other our sincerity. We should communicate our wealth, and not purchase that which does not belong to us, for a sign. Why give each other a sign to keep? If we gave the thing itself, there would be no need of a sign. . . .

The eaves are running on the south side of the house, the titmouse lisps in the poplar, the bells are ringing for church, while the sun presides over all and makes his simple warmth more obvious than all else. What shall I do with the hour so like time and yet so fit for eternity? Where in me are these russet patches of ground, and scattered logs and chips in the yard? I do not feel cluttered. — I have some notion what the Johnswort and life-everlasting may be thinking about when the sun shines on me as on them, and turns my prompt thought into just such a seething shimmer. I lie out as indistinct as a heath at noonday. I am evaporating and ascending into the sun. . . .

The most I can do for my friend is simply to be his friend. I have no wealth to bestow on him. If he knows that I am happy in loving him, he will want no other reward. Is not Friendship divine in this?

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I have myself to respect, but to myself I am not amiable; but my friend is my amiableness personified. . . .

The world has never learned what men can build each other up to be, when both master and pupil work in love. . . .

Wait not till I invite thee, but observe that I am glad to see thee when thou comest.

The most ardent lover holds yet a private court, and his love can never be so strong and ethereal that there will not be danger that judgment be rendered against the beloved. . . .

So far as we respond to our ideal estimate of each other, do we have profitable intercourse.

Feb. 7, 1857. Hayden, the elder, tells me that the quails have come to his yard every day for about a month, and are just as tame as chickens. They come about his wood shed, he supposes, to pick up the worms that have dropped out of the wood, and when it storms hard, gather together in a corner of the shed. He walks within about three or four feet of them without disturbing them. . . . They will be about his yard the greater part of the day; were there yesterday, though it was so warm, but now probably can get food enough elsewhere. They go just the same to Poland's across the road. About ten years ago there was a bevy of fifteen that used to come from the same woods, and one

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day they being in the barn and scared by the cat, four ran into the hay and died there. . . . Thus it seems in severe winters the quails venture out of the woods, and join the poultry of the farmer's yard, if it be near the edge of the wood. It is remarkable that this bird, which thus half domesticates itself, should not be found wholly domesticated before this.

Feb. 7, 1858. . . . If possible, come upon the top of a hill unexpectedly, perhaps through woods, and then look off from it to the distant earth which lies behind a bluer veil, before you can see directly down it, *i. e.*, bringing its own near top against the distant landscape.

Feb. 7, 1859. Evidently the distant woods are more blue in a warm and moist or misty day in winter, and is not this connected with the blue in snow in similar days?

Going along the Nut Meadow on Jimmy Miles's road, when I see the sulphur lichens on the rails, brightening with the moisture, I feel like studying them again as a relisher and tonic, to make life go down and digest well, as we use pepper and vinegar and salads. They are a sort of winter green which we gather and assimilate with our eyes. That 's the true use of the study of lichens. I expect thus the lichenist will have the keenest relish for Nature in her every-day mood and dress. He will have the appetite of the worm that never dies, of the grub. To

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study lichens is to get a taste of earth and health, to go gnawing the rails and rocks. This product of the bark is the essence of all tonics. The lichenist extracts nutriment from the very crust of the earth. A taste for this study is an evidence of titanic health, a rare earthiness. It makes not so much blood as soil of life. It fits a man to deal with the barrenest and rockiest experience. A little moisture, a fog, or rain, or melted snow makes his wilderness to blossom like the rose. As some strong animal appetites, not satisfied with starch and muscle and fat, are fain to eat that which eats and digests the contents of the crop, the stomach and entrails themselves, so the lichenist loves the tripe of the rock, that which eats and digests the rocks. He eats the eater. Eat-all may be his name. A lichenist fattens where others starve. His provender never fails. . . . There is no such collyrium or salve for sore eyes as these brightening lichens on a moist day. Go bathe and screen your eyes with them in the softened light of the woods.

Feb. 8, 1839. When the poetic frenzy seizes us, we run and scratch with our pen, delighting, like the cock, in the dust we make, but do not detect where the jewel lies which we have in the mean time cast to a distance, or quite covered up again.

Feb. 8, 1841. All we have experienced is so much gone within us, and there lies. It is the

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company we keep. One day, in health or sickness, it will come out and be remembered. Neither body nor soul forgets anything. The twig always remembers the wind that shook it, and the stone the cuff it received. Ask the old tree and the sand. . . .

Are we not always in youth so long as we face heaven? We may always live in the morning of our days. To him who seeks early, the sun never gets over the edge of the horizon, but his rays fall slanting forever. . . .

My journal is that of me which would else spill over and run to waste, gleanings from the field which in action I reap. I must not live for it, but, in it, for the gods. They are my correspondent to whom daily I send off this sheet, post-paid. I am clerk in their counting-room, and at evening transfer the account from day-book to ledger. It is a leaf which hangs over my head in the path. I bend the twig, and write my prayers on it; then, letting it go, the bough springs up and shows the scrawl to heaven; as if it were not kept shut in my desk, but were as public a leaf as any in nature. It is papyrus by the river side, it is vellum in the pastures, it is parchment on the hills. . . . Like the sere leaves in yonder vase, these have been gathered far and wide. Upland and lowland, forest and field, have been ransacked.

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In our holiest moment, our devil with a leer stands close at hand. He is a very busy devil. . . . When I go forth with zeal to some good work, my devil is sure to get his robe tucked up the first, and arrives there as soon as I, with a look of sincere earnestness, which puts to shame my best intent. . . . He has a winning way of recommending himself by making himself useful. How readily he comes into my best project, and does his work with a quiet and steady cheerfulness which even virtue may take pattern from. . . . I never did a charitable thing, but there he stood, scarce in the rear, hat in hand, partner in the same errand, ready to share the smile of gratitude. Though I shut the door never so quick, and tell him to stay home like a good dog, he will out with me, for I shut in my own legs so, and he escapes in the mean while, and is ready to back and reinforce me in most virtuous deeds. If I turn and say, "Get thee behind me," he then indeed turns too, and takes the lead, though he seems to retire with a pensive and compassionate look, as much as to say, "Ye know not what ye do."

Feb. 8, 1852. . . . Tuckerman says cunningly, "If the rapt admirer of the wonders and beauties of life and being might well come to learn of our knowledge the laws and the history of what he loves, let us remember that we have

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the best right to all the pleasure that he has discovered, and that we are not complete if we do not possess it all. Linnæus was as hearty a lover and admirer of nature, as if he had been nothing more." . . .

Carried a new cloak to Johnny Riorden. I found that the shanty was warmed by the simple social relations of the Irish. On Sunday they come from the town and stand in the doorway, and so keep out the cold. One is not cold among his brothers and sisters. What if there is less fire on the hearth, if there is more in the heart. These Irish are not succeeding so ill after all. The little boy goes to the primary school, and proves a foremost boy there, and the mother's brother, who has let himself in the village, tells me that he takes "The Flag of Our Union," if that is the paper edited by an Irishman. It is musical news that Johnny does not love to be kept at home from school in deep snows.

Feb. 8, 1854. . . . Josselyn, speaking of crickets, says, "The Italian who hath them cryed up and down the streets (*Grilli che cantano*), and buyeth them to put into his gardens, if he were in New England would gladly be rid of them, they make such a din in the evening." I am more charmed by the Italian's taste than by Josselyn's impatience.

Feb. 8, 1857. Debauched and worn out

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senses require the violent vibrations of an instrument to excite them, but sound and still youthful senses, not enervated by luxury, hear music in the wind and rain and running water. One would think, from reading the critics, that music was intermittent, as a spring in the desert, dependent on some Paganini or Mozart, or heard only when the Pierians or Euterpeans drive through the villages, but music is perpetual, and only hearing is intermittent. I hear it in the softened air of these warm February days which have broken the back of the winter. . . .

Again and again I congratulate myself on my so-called poverty. I was almost disappointed yesterday to find thirty dollars in my desk which I did not know that I possessed, though now I should be sorry to lose it. The week that I go away to lecture is unspeakably cheapened. The preceding and succeeding days are a mere sloping down to and up from it. In the society of many men, or in the midst of what is called success, I find my life of no account, and my spirits rapidly fall. I would rather be the barrenest pasture lying fallow than cursed with the compliments of kings, than be the sulphurous and accursed desert where Babylon once stood. But when I hear only the rustling oak leaf, or the faint metallic cheep of the tree sparrow, for variety in my winter walk, my life becomes

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continent, and sweet as the kernel of a nut. I would rather hear a single shrub oak leaf at the end of a wintry glade rustle of its own accord at my approach than receive a ship-load of stars and garters from the strange kings and peoples of the earth. By poverty, *i. e.*, simplicity of life and fewness of incidents, I am solidified and crystallized as a vapor or liquid by cold. It is a singular concentration of strength and energy and flavor. Chastity is perpetual acquaintance with the All. My diffuse and vaporous life becomes as the frost leaves and spiculæ radiant as gems on the weeds and stubble in a winter morning. You think I am impoverishing myself by withdrawing from men, but in my solitude I have woven for myself a silken web or chrysalis, and nymph-like shall erelong burst forth a more perfect creature, fitted for a higher society. . . .

And now another friendship is ended. I do not know what has made my friend doubt me, but I know that in love there is no mistake, and that every estrangement is well-founded. But my destiny is not narrowed, rather, if possible, the broader for it. The heavens withdraw, and arch themselves higher. I am sensible not only of a moral, but even of a grand physical pain, such as gods may feel, about my head and breast, a certain ache and fullness. This rending of a

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tie, it is not my work nor thine. It is no accident that we mind; it is only the awards of fate that are affecting. I know of no æons or periods, no life and death, but these meetings and separations. My life is like a stream that is suddenly dammed and has no outlet. But it rises the higher up the hills that shut it in, and will become a deep and silent lake. Certainly there is no event comparable for grandeur with the eternal separation, if we may conceive it so, from a being that we have known. I become in a degree sensible of the meaning of finite and infinite. What a grand significance the word "never" acquires! With one with whom we have walked on high ground, we cannot deal on any lower ground ever after. We have tried so many years to put each other to this immortal use, and have failed. Undoubtedly our good genii have mutually found the material unsuitable. We have hitherto paid each other the highest possible compliment, we have recognized each other constantly as divine, have afforded each other that opportunity to live that no other wealth or kindness can afford. And now for some reason inappreciable by us, it has become necessary for us to withhold this mutual aid. Perchance there is none beside who knows us for a god, and none whom we know for such. Each man and woman is a veritable god or god-

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dess, but to the mass of their fellows disguised. There is only one in each case who sees through the disguise. That one who does not stand so near to any man as to see the divinity in him is truly alone. I am perfectly sad at parting from you. I could better have the earth taken away from under my feet, than the thought of you from my mind. One while I think that some great injury has been done, with which you are implicated; again, that you are no party to it. I fear that there may be incessant tragedies, that one may treat his fellow as a god, but receive somewhat less regard from him. I now almost for the first time fear this. Yet I believe that in the long run there is no such inequality.

Feb. 8, 1860. 2 P. M. Up river to Fair Haven Hill. Thermometer 43°. . . . There is a peculiarity in the air when the temperature is thus high, and the weather fair at this season, which makes sounds more clear and pervading, as if they trusted themselves abroad farther in this genial state of the air. A different sound comes to my ear now from iron rails which are struck, from the cawing of crows, etc. Sound is not abrupt, piercing, or rending, but softly sweet and musical. There must be a still more genial and milder air before the bluebird's warble can be heard.

Feb. 8, 1861. Coldest day yet. —22° at

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least (all we can read), at 8 A. M., and so far as I can learn, not above —6° all day.

Feb. 9, 1838. It is wholesome advice "to be a man amongst folks." — Go into society, if you will, or if you are unwilling, and take a human interest in its affairs. If you mistake these Messieurs and Mesdames for so many men and women, it is but erring on the safe side, or rather it is their error and not yours. Armed with a manly sincerity, you shall not be trifled with, but drive this business of life. To manage the small talk of a party is to make an effort to do what was at first done admirably, because naturally, at your own fireside.

Feb. 9, 1841. . . .

"Whoe'er is raised
For wealth he has not, he is taxed, not praised,"

says Jonson. If you mind the flatterer, you rob yourself, and still cheat him. The fates never exaggerate. Men pass for what they are. The state never fails to get a revenue out of you without a direct tax. What I am praised for which I have not, I put to the account of the gods. It needs a skillful eye to distinguish between their coin and my own. However, there can be no loss either way. For what meed I have earned is equally theirs. Let neither fame nor infamy hit you, but one go as far beyond as the other falls behind. Let the one glance

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past you to the gods, and the other wallow where it was engendered. The home thrusts are at helmets upon blocks, and my worst foes but stab an armor through.

My life at this moment is like a summer morning when birds are singing. Yet that is false, for nature's is an idle pleasure in comparison. My hour has a more solid serenity.

I have been breaking silence these twenty-three years, and have hardly made a rent in it. Silence has no end. Speech is but the beginning of it. My friend thinks I *keep* silence who am only choked with letting it out so fast. Does he forget that new mines of secrecy are constantly opening in me? . . .

When your host shuts his door on you, he incloses you in the dwelling of nature. He thrusts you over the threshold of the world. My foes restore me to my friends. — I might say friendship had no ears, as love has no eyes, for no word is evidence in its court. The least act fulfills more than all words profess. The most gracious speech is but partial kindness, but the smallest genuine deed takes the whole man. If he had waited till doomsday, it could never have been uttered.

Feb. 9, 1852. I am interested to see the seeds of the poke, about a dozen, shiny, black, with a white spot, somewhat like a saba bean in shape, the still full granary of the birds.

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9 A. M. Up river to Fair Haven Pond. . . . Met —— on the river, . . . fishing, wearing an old coat much patched with many colors. He represents the Indian still. The very patches on his coat and his improvident life do so. I feel that he is as essential a part, nevertheless, of our community as the lawyer in the village. He tells me that he caught three pickerel here the other day that weighed seven pounds all together. It is the old story. The fisherman is a natural story-teller. No man's imagination plays more pranks than his, while he is tending his reels, and trotting from one to another, or watching his cork in summer. He is ever waiting for the sky to fall. He has sent out a venture. He has a ticket in the lottery of fate, and who knows what it may draw. He ever expects to catch a bigger fish yet. He is the most patient and believing of men. Who else will stand so long in wet places? When the hay-maker runs to shelter, he takes down his pole, and bends his steps to the river, glad to have a leisure day. . . . He is more like an inhabitant of nature. . . .

Men tell about the mirage to be seen in certain deserts, and in peculiar states of the atmosphere. The mirage is constant. The state of the atmosphere is continually varying, and to a keen observer objects do not twice present exactly the same appearance. If I invert my head

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this morning and look at the woods in the horizon, they do not look so far off and elysian-like as in the afternoon. If I mistake not, it is late in the afternoon when the atmosphere is in such a state that we derive the most pleasure from and are most surprised by this experiment. The prospect is thus a constantly varying mirage answering to the condition of our perceptive faculties and our fluctuating imagination. If we incline our heads never so little, the most familiar things begin to put on some new aspect. If we invert our heads completely, our desecrated wood-lot appears far off, incredible, elysian, unprofaned by us. As you cannot swear through glass, no more can you swear through air, the thinnest section of it. . . . When was not the air as elastic as our spirits. . . . It is a new glass placed over the picture every hour. . . .

When I break off a twig of green-barked sassafras, as I am going through the woods now, and smell it, I am startled to find it fragrant as in summer. It is an importation of all the spices of Oriental summers into our New England winter, very foreign to the snow and the oak leaves.

Feb. 9, 1853. . . . Saw the grisly bear near the Haymarket [Boston] to-day, said (?) to weigh nineteen hundred pounds; apparently too much. He looked four feet and a few inches in height

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by as much in length, not including his great head and his tail, which was invisible. He looked gentle, and continually sucked his claws, and cleaned between them with his tongue. Small eyes and funny little ears. Perfectly bearish, with a strong wild beast scent; fed on Indian meal and water. Hind paws a foot long. Lying down with his feet up against the bars; often sitting up in the corner on his hind quarters.

Feb. 9, 1855. Snowed harder in the night, and blew considerably. . . . I was so sure this storm would bring snowbirds that I went to the window at ten to look for them, and there they were. Also, a downy woodpecker (perhaps a hairy) flitted high across the street to an elm in front of the house, and commenced assiduously tapping, his head going like a hammer.

Feb. 9, 1858. . . . Saw, at Simon Brown's, a sketch, apparently made with a pen, on which was written, "Concord Jail, near Boston, America," and on a fresher piece of paper, on which the above was pasted, was written, "The jail in which General Sir Archld Campbell and —— Wilson were confined when taken off Boston in America by a French Privateer." A letter on the back side from Mr. Lewis of Framingham to Mr. Brown stated that Mr. Lewis had received the sketch from a grandson of Wilson who drew it. — You are supposed to be in the

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jail yard, or close to it westward, and see the old jail, gambrel-roofed, the old Hurd house (partly) west of the grave-yard, the grave-yard and Dr. Hurd house, and over the last, and to the north of it, a wooded hill, apparently Windmill Hill. Just north of the Hurd house, beyond it, apparently the Court-house and School-house, both with belfries, also the road to the battle ground, and a distant farmhouse on a hill, French's or Buttrick's, perhaps.

Feb. 10, 1841. . . . Our thoughts and actions may be very private for a long time, for they demand a more catholic publicity to be displayed in than the world can afford. Our best deeds shun the narrow walks of men, and are not ambitious of the faint light the world can shed on them, but delight to unfold themselves in that public ground between God and conscience. . . . Within, where I resolve and deal with principles, there is more space and room than anywhere without where my hands execute. Men should hear of your virtue only as they hear the creaking of the earth's axle and the music of the spheres. It will fall into the course of nature, and be effectually concealed by publicness.

Feb. 10, 1852. Now if there are any who think I am vainglorious, that I set myself up above others, and crow over their low estate,

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let me say that I could tell a pitiful story respecting myself as well as them, if my spirits held out to do it. I could encourage them with a sufficient list of failures, and could flow as humbly as the very gutters themselves. . . . I think worse of myself than they can possibly think of me, being better acquainted with the man. I put the best face on the matter. I will tell them this secret, if they will not tell it to anybody else.

Write while the heat is in you. When the farmer burns a hole in his yoke, he carries the iron quickly from the fire to the wood, for every moment it is less effectual to penetrate it. . . . The writer who postpones the recording of his thoughts, uses an iron which has cooled to burn a hole with. He cannot inflame the minds of his audience. . . .

I saw yesterday in the snow on the ice on the S. side of Fair Haven Pond some hundreds of honey bees dead and sunk half an inch below the crust. They had evidently come forth from their hive, perhaps in a large hemlock on the bank close by, and had fallen on the snow, chilled to death. Their bodies extended about three rods from the tree toward the pond.

Feb. 10, 1854. . . . I observe the great, well-protected buds of the balm of Gilead, spear-head-like. There is no shine upon them now,

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and their viscidness is not very apparent. A great many willow catkins show a little down peeping from under the points of the scales, but I have no doubt that all this was done last fall. I noticed it then.

Feb. 10, 1855. . . . I hear the faint metallic chirp of a tree sparrow in the yard from time to time, or perchance the mew of a linaria. It is worth while to let some pigweed grow in your garden, if only to attract these winter visitors. It would be a pity to have these weeds burned in the fall. Of the former, I see in the winter but three or four commonly at a time; of the latter, large flocks. This is in or after considerable snow-storms.

Feb. 10, 1856. . . . P. M. To Walden. Returning I saw a fox on the railroad, . . . eight or nine rods from me. He looked of a dirty yellow, and lean. I did not notice the white tip to his tail. Seeing me, he pricked up his ears, and at first ran up and along the E. bank on the crust, then changed his mind, and came down the steep bank, crossed the railroad before me, and gliding up the west bank, disappeared in the woods. He coursed or glided along easily, appearing not to lift his feet high, leaping over obstacles with his tail extended straight behind. He leaped over the ridge of snow about two feet high and three wide between the tracks,

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very gracefully. I followed examining his tracks. There was about a quarter of an inch of recent snow above the crust, but for the most part he broke in two or three inches. I slumped from one to three feet. . . . He went off at an easy gliding pace such as he might keep up for a long time, pretty direct after his first turning.

Feb. 10, 1857. . . . Burton, the traveler, quotes an Arab saying, "Voyaging is a victory," which he refers to the feeling of independence on overcoming the difficulties and dangers of the desert. But I think that commonly voyaging is a defeat, a rout to which the traveler is compelled by want of valor. The traveler's peculiar valor is commonly a bill of exchange. He is at home anywhere but where he was born and bred, petitioning some Sir Joseph Banks or other representative of a Geographical Society to avail himself of his restlessness, and if not receiving a favorable answer, necessarily going off somewhere next morning. It is a prevalent disease which attacks Americans especially, both men and women, the opposite to nostalgia. Yet it does not differ much from nostalgia. I read the story of one voyager round the world, who it seemed to me, having started, had no other object but to get home again, only she took the longest way round. The traveler, fitted out by

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some Sir Joseph Banks, snatches at a fact or two in behalf of science, as he goes, just as a panther in his leap will take off a man's sleeve, and land twenty feet beyond him, when traveling down hill.

Feb. 10, 1860. . . . The river where open is very black, as usual, when the waves run high, for each wave casts a shadow. Theophrastus notices that the roughened water is black, and says it is because fewer rays fall on it, and the light is dissipated. . . .

I do not know of any more exhilarating walking than up or down a broad field of smooth ice like this in a cold, glittering, winter day, when your rubbers give you a firm hold on the ice.

Feb. 11, 1841. True help, for the most part, implies a greatness in him who is to be helped as well as in the helper. It takes a god to be helped even. A great person, though unconsciously, will constantly give you great opportunities to serve him, but a mean one will quite preclude all active benevolence. It needs but simply and greatly to want it for once, that all true men may contend who shall be foremost to render aid. My neighbor's state must pray to heaven so devoutly, yet disinterestedly, as he never prayed in words, before my ears can hear. It must ask divinely. But men so cobble and botch their request that you must stoop as low

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as they to give them aid. Their meanness would drag down your deed to be a compromise with conscience, and not leave it to be done on the high table-land of the benevolent soul. . . . But if I am to serve them, I must not serve the devil. . . . We go about mending the times when we should be building the eternity.

Feb. 11, 1852. . . . I have lived some thirty odd years on this planet, and I have yet to hear the first syllable of valuable or even earnest advice from my seniors. They have told me nothing, and probably can tell me nothing, to the purpose. There is life, an experiment untried by me, and it does not avail me that you have tried it. If I have any valuable experience I am sure to reflect that this my mentors said nothing about. What were mysteries to the child remain mysteries to the old man.

It is a mistake to suppose that in a country where railroads and steamboats and the printing press and the church, where the usual evidences of civilization exist, the condition of a very large body of the inhabitants may not be as degraded as that of savages. . . . To know this, I should not need to look farther than to the shanties which everywhere line our railroads, that last improvement in civilization. But I will refer you to Ireland, which is marked as one of the white, or enlightened spots on the map.

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Yet I have no doubt that that nation's rulers are as wise as the average of civilized rulers.

Feb. 12. Living all winter with an open door for light, and no visible wood-pile, the forms of old and young are permanently contracted through long shrinking from cold, and their faces pinched by want. I have seen an old crone sitting bare-headed on the hillside in the middle of January, while it was raining, and the ground was slowly thawing under her, knitting there. . . . There is no greater squalidness in any part of the world. Contrast the condition of these Irish with that of the North American Indian, or the South Sea Islander, or any other savage race before they are degraded by contact with civilized man.

Feb. 11, 1853. . . . While surveying on the Hunt farm the other day, behind Simon Brown's house, I heard a remarkable echo. In the course of surveying, being obliged to call aloud to my assistant from every side and almost every part of a farm in succession and at various hours of a day, I am pretty sure to discover an echo, if any exists. That day it was encouraging and soothing to hear one. After so many days of comparatively insignificant drudgery with stupid companions, this leisure, this sportiveness, this generosity in nature, sympathizing with the better part of me, somebody I could talk with,

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one degree at least better than talking with one's self. Ah, Simon Brown's premises harbor a hired man and a hired maid he wots not of; some voice of somebody I pined to hear, with whom I could form a community. I did wish rather to linger there and call all day to the air, and hear my words repeated, but a vulgar necessity dragged me along round the bounds of the farm to hear only the stale answers of my chainman shouted back to me. . . . Has it to do with the season of the year? I have since heard an echo on Moore's farm.

It was the memorable event of the day, that echo I heard, not anything my companions said, or the travelers I met, or my thoughts, for they were all mere repetitions or echoes in the worst sense of what I had heard and thought before many times, but this echo was accompanied with novelty, and by its repetition of my voice it did more than double that. It was a profounder Socratic method of suggesting thoughts unutterable to me the speaker. Here was one I heartily love to talk with. Under such favorable auspices, I could converse with myself, could reflect. The hour, the atmosphere, and the conformation of the ground permitted it.

Feb. 11, 1854. 7.30 A. M. Snow fleas lie in black patches like some of those dark, rough lichens on rocks, or like ink spots three or four

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inches in diameter, about the grass stems or willows, on the ice which froze last night. When I breathe on them, I find them all alive and ready to skip. Also the water, when I break the ice, arouses them.

I saw yesterday in a muddy spring in Tarbell's meadow many cockle shells on the bottom, with their feet out, and marks as if they had been moving.

When I read of the catkins of the alder and the willow, etc., scattering their yellow pollen, they impress me as a vegetation which belongs to the earliest and most innocent dawn of nature, as if they must have preceded other trees in the order of creation, as they precede them annually in their blossoming and leafing. . . . For how many æons did the willow shed its yellow pollen annually before man was created!

In the winter we so value the semblance of fruit that even the dry, black female catkins of the alder are an interesting sight, not to mention, on shoots rising a foot or two above these, the red or mulberry male catkins in little parcels dangling at a less than right angle with the stems, and the short female ones at their bases.

Apparently I read Cato and Varro from the same motives that Virgil did, and as I read the almanac, the "N. E. Farmer," or "Cultivator," or Howitt's "Seasons."

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Feb. 11, 1856. . . . Saw a partridge by the river side . . . which at first I mistook for the top of a fence post above the snow amid some alders. I shouted and waved my hand four rods off to see if it was one, but there was no motion, and I thought surely it must be a post. Nevertheless I resolved to investigate. Within three rods I saw to my surprise that it was indeed a partridge, standing perfectly still, with its head erect and neck stretched upward. It was as complete a deception as if it had designedly placed itself on the line of the fence and in the proper place for a post. It finally stepped off daintily with a teetering gait and head up, and took to wing.

Feb. 11, 1859. Now, as often after a freshet in cold weather, the ice which had formed around and frozen to the trees and bushes along the shore, settling, draws them down to the ground or water, after breaking them extensively. It reminds you of an alligator or other evil genius of the river pulling the trees and bushes, which had come to drink, into the water. If a maple or alder is unfortunate enough to slip its lower limbs into the freshet, dallying with it, their fate is sealed, for the water freezing that night takes fast hold of them like a vise, and when the water runs out from beneath, an irresistible weight brings them down to the

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ground and holds them there. Only the spring sun will soften the heart of this relentless monster when commonly it is too late.

Feb. 12, 1840. . . . Knavery is more foolish than folly, since, half knowing its own foolishness, it still persists. The knave has reduced folly to a system, is the prudent, common-sense fool.

Feb. 12, 1851. . . . I find that it is an excellent walk for variety and novelty and wildness to keep round the edge of the meadow. The ice not being strong enough to bear, and transparent as water, on the bare ground or snow just between the highest water mark and the present water line is a narrow, meandering walk rich in unexpected views and objects. The line of rubbish which marks the higher tides, withered flags and seeds and twigs and cranberries, is to my eyes a very agreeable and significant line which nature traces along the edge of the meadows. It is a strongly marked, enduring, natural line which in summer reminds me that the water has once stood over where I walk. Sometimes the grooved trees tell the same tale. The wrecks of the meadow fill a thousand coves, and tell a thousand tales to those who can read them; our prairial, mediterranean shore. . . . If you cannot go on the ice, you are then gently compelled to take this course, which is, on the whole,

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more beautiful, to follow the sinuosities of the meadow.

Feb. 12, 1854. . . . P. M. Skate to Pantry Brook. . . . One accustomed to glide over a boundless and variegated ice floor like this cannot be much attracted by tessellated floors and mosaic work. I skate over a thin ice all tessellated, so to speak, or on which you see the forms of the crystals as they shot. . . . To make a perfect winter day like this, you must have a clear, sparkling air, with a sheen from the snow, sufficient cold, no wind, and the warmth must come directly from the sun. It must not be a thawing warmth. The tension of nature must not be relaxed. The earth must be resonant, if bare. You hear the lisping music of chickadees from time to time, and the unrelenting steel-cold scream of a jay, unmelted, that never flows into a song, a sort of wintry trumpet, screaming cold, hard, tense, frozen music like the winter sky itself. . . . There is no hint of incubation in the jay's scream. There is no cushion for sound now. It tears our ears.

I frequently see three or four old white birches standing together on the edge of a pond or meadow, and am struck by the pleasing manner in which they will commonly be grouped, how they spread so as to make room for each other, and make an agreeable impression upon

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the eye. Methinks I have seen groups of three in different places arranged almost exactly alike.

Returning I overhauled a muskrat's house by Bidens Brook. For want of other material it was composed of grass flags, and in a great measure (one half) of twigs and sticks, mostly sweet-gale, both dead and alive, and roots, from six inches to two feet in length. These were in fact the principal material of it, and it was a large one, two feet above the ice. I was surprised to find that these sticks, both green and dead, had the greater part of them been gnawed off by the rat, and some were nearly half an inch in diameter. They were cut off not at a right angle, with a smooth cut, but by successive cuts, smooth as with a knife, the twig being at the same time bent down, which produced a sloping, and, so to speak, terraced surface. I did not know before that the muskrat resembled the beaver in this respect also. It was chiefly the sweet-gale thus cut, commonly the top left on two feet long, but sometimes cut off six inches long.

I see, as I skate, reflected from the surface of the ice, flakes of rainbow, somewhat like cobwebs, where the great slopes of the crystallization fall at the right angle, six inches or a foot across, but at so small an angle with the horizon

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that they had seemed absolutely flat and level before. Think of this kind of mosaic and tessellation for your floor, composed of crystals variously set, made up of surfaces not absolutely level, though level to the touch of the feet and to the noonday eye, but just enough inclined to reflect the colors of the rainbow when the sun gets low.

Feb. 12, 1857. 7.30 A. M. The caterpillar which I placed last night on the snow beneath the thermometer is frozen stiff again, this time not being curled up, the temperature being —6° now. Yet being placed on the mantel-piece, it thaws and begins to crawl in five or ten minutes, before the rear part of its body is limber. Perhaps they were revived last week when the thermometer stood at 52° and 53°.

Feb. 12, 1860. 2 P. M. 22°. Walk up river to Fair Haven Pond. Clear and windy. . . . In this cold, clear, rough air from the N. W. we walk amid what simple surroundings, surrounded by our thoughts or imaginary objects. . . . Above me is a cloudless blue sky, beneath is the sky blue, *i. e.*, sky-reflecting ice, with patches of snow scattered over it like mackerel clouds. At a distance in several directions I see the tawny earth streaked or spotted with white, where the bank, or hills and fields appear, or the green-black, evergreen forests, or the brown,

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or russet, or tawny deciduous woods, and here and there, where the agitated surface of the river is exposed, the blue-black water. That dark-eyed water, especially where I see it at right angles with the direction of the sun, is it not the first sign of spring? How its darkness contrasts with the general lightness of the winter! It has more life in it than any part of the earth's surface. It is where one of the arteries of the earth is palpable, visible. In winter not only some creatures, but the very earth is partially dormant. Vegetation ceases, and rivers, to some extent, cease to flow. Therefore when I see the water exposed in mid-winter, it is as if I saw a skunk or even a striped squirrel out. It is as if the woodchuck consoled himself, and snuffed the air to see if it were warm enough to be trusted. It excites me to see early in the spring that black artery leaping once more through the snow-clad town. All is tumult and life there. . . . Where this artery is shallowest, *i. e.*, comes nearest to the surface and runs swiftest, there it shows itself soonest, and you may see its pulse beat. There are the wrists, temples of the earth where I feel its pulse with my eye. The living waters, not the dead earth. . . . Returning just before sunset, I see the ice beginning to be green, and a rose color to be reflected from the low snow patches. I see the color from the

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snow first where there is some shade, as where the shadow of a maple falls afar over the ice and snow. From this is reflected a purple tinge when I see none elsewhere. Some shadow or twilight then is necessary, umbra mixed with the reflected sun. Off Holden wood where the low rays fall on the river through the fringe of the wood, the patches are not rose color, but a very dark purple, like a grape, and thus there are all degrees from pure white to black. As I cross Hubbard's broad meadow, the snow patches are a most beautiful crystalline purple, like the petals of some flowers, or as if tinged with cranberry juice. . . .

I walk over a smooth green sea or æquor, the sun just disappearing in the cloudless horizon, amid thousands of these flat isles as purple as the petals of a flower. It would not be more enchanting to walk amid the purple clouds of the sunset sky. And, by the way, this is but a sunset sky under our feet, produced by the same law, the same slanting rays and twilight. Here the clouds are these patches of snow or frozen vapor, and the ice is the greenish sky between them. Thus all of heaven is realized on earth. You have seen those purple, fortunate isles in the sunset heavens, and that green and amber sky between them. Would you believe that you could ever walk amid those isles? You can on

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many a winter evening. I have done so a hundred times.

Thus the sky and the earth sympathize, and are subject to the same laws, and in the horizon they, as it were, meet and are seen to be one. . . .

We have such a habit of looking away that we see not what is around us. How few are aware that in winter, when the earth is covered with snow and ice, the phenomenon of the sunset sky is double. The one is on the earth around us, the other in the horizon.

Feb. 13, 1838. It is hard to subject ourselves to an influence. It must steal upon us when we expect it not, and its work be all done ere we are aware of it. If we make advances, it is shy; if, when we feel its presence, we presume to pry into its freemasonry, it vanishes, and leaves us alone in our folly.

All fear of the world or consequences is swallowed up in a manly anxiety to do truth justice.

Feb. 13, 1840. An act of integrity is to an act of duty what the French verb *être* is to *devoir*. Duty is that which *devrait être*. Duty belongs to the understanding, but genius is not dutiful. . . . The perfect man has both genius and talent; the one is his head, the other, his foot. By one, he is; by the other, he lives.

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The consciousness of man is the consciousness of God, the end of the world.

The very thrills of genius are disorganizing. The body is never quite acclimated to its atmosphere, but how often succumbs, and goes into a decline.

Feb. 13, 1841. By the truthfulness of our story to-day, we help explain ourselves for all our life henceforth. How we hamper and belay ourselves by the least exaggeration. The truth is God's concern; he will sustain it. But who can afford to maintain a lie? We have taken away one of the pillars of Hercules, and must support the world on our shoulders, who might have walked freely upon it.

Feb. 13, 1851. Skated to Sudbury. A beautiful summer-like day. The meadows were frozen just enough to bear. Examined now the fleets of ice flakes close at hand. They are a very singular and interesting phenomenon which I do not remember to have seen. I should say that when the water was frozen about as thick as pasteboard, a violent gust had here and there broken it up, and while the wind and waves held it on its edge, the increasing cold froze it in firmly. So it seemed, for the flakes were, for the most part, turned one way, *i. e.*, standing on one side, you saw only their edges, on another, the N. E. or S. W., their sides. They were com-

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monly of a triangular form, like a shoulder-of-mutton (?) sail, slightly scalloped, like shells. They looked like a fleet of a thousand mackerel fishers under a press of sail, careering before a smacking breeze. Sometimes the sun and wind had reduced them to the thinness of writing paper, and they fluttered and rustled and tinkled merrily. I skated through them and scattered their wrecks around. Every half mile or mile, as you skate up the river, you see these crystal fleets. . . .

Again I saw to-day half a mile off in Sudbury a sandy spot on the top of a hill, where I prophesied that I should find traces of the Indians. When within a dozen rods, I distinguished the foundation of a lodge, and merely passing over it, I saw many fragments of the arrowhead stone. I have frequently distinguished these localities half a mile off, gone forward, and picked up arrowheads.

Saw in a warm, muddy brook in Sudbury, quite open and exposed, the skunk-cabbage spathes above water. The tops of the spathes were frost-bitten, but the fruit sound. There was one partly expanded, the first flower of the season, for it is a flower. I doubt if there is a month without its flower. . . .

In society, in the best institutions of men, I remark a certain precocity. When we should

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be growing children, we are already little men. Infants as we are, we make haste to be weaned from our great mother's breast, and cultivate our parts by intercourse with one another. . . . I would not have every man, nor every part of a man, cultivated any more than I would have every acre of earth cultivated. Some must be preparing a mould by the annual decay of the forests which they sustain.

Feb. 13, 1852. Color, which is the poet's wealth, is so expensive, that most take to mere outline or pencil sketches, and become men of science.

Feb. 13, 1855. . . . The tracks of partridges are more remarkable in this snow than usual, it is so light, being, at the same time, a foot deep. . . . I see where many have dived into the snow, apparently last night, on the side of a shrub oak hollow. In four places they have passed quite underneath it for more than a foot; in one place, eighteen inches. They appear to have dived or burrowed into it, then passed along a foot or more underneath, and squatted there, perhaps with their heads out. . . . I scared one from its hole only half a rod in front of me, now at 11 A. M. . . . It is evidently a hardy bird, and in the above respects, too, is like the rabbit, which squats under a brake or bush in the snow. I see the traces of the

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latter in hollows in the snow in such places, their forms. . . .

One of these pigweeds in the yard lasts the snowbirds all winter. After every snow-storm, they revisit it. How inexhaustible their granary.

To resume the subject of partridges, looking farther in an open place . . . amid the shrub oaks and low pitch pines, I found as many as twenty or thirty places where partridges had lodged in the snow apparently the last night or the night before. You could see commonly where their bodies had first struck the snow, and furrowed it for a foot or two, twenty-six inches wide, then entered and gone underneath two feet, and rested at the farther end. . . . Is it not likely that they remain quite under the snow there, and do not put their heads out till ready to start? They do not go under deep, and the gallery they make is mostly filled up behind them, leaving only a thin crust above. Then invariably just beyond this resting place, you could see the marks made by their wings when they took their departure. These distinct impressions made by their wings on the pure snow, so common on all hands, though the bird that made it is gone, and there is no trace beyond, affect me like some mystic Oriental symbol, the winged globe or what not, as if made by a spirit. In some places you would see a furrow

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and hollow in the snow where there was no track for rods around, as if a large snow-ball or cannon-ball had struck it, where apparently the birds had not paused in their flight. It is evidently a regular thing with them thus to lodge in the snow.

Feb. 13, 1859. P. M. On ice to Fair Haven Pond. . . . The yellowish ice which froze yesterday and last night is thickly and evenly strewn with fibrous frost crystals very much like bits of asbestos, an inch or more long, sometimes arranged like a star or rosette, one for every inch or two. . . . I think this is the vapor from the water which found its way up through the ice, and froze in the night. It is sprinkled like some kind of grain, and is in certain places much more thickly strewn, as where a little snow shows itself above the ice. — The old ice is covered with a dry, powdery snow about one inch deep, from which as I walk toward the sun, this perfectly clear, bright afternoon at half-past three o'clock, the colors of the rainbow are reflected from a myriad fine facets. It is as if the dust of diamonds and other precious stones were spread all around. The blue and red predominate. Though I distinguish these colors everywhere toward the sun, they are so much more abundantly reflected to me from two directions that I see two distinct rays or arms, so to

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call them, of this rainbow-like dust stretching away from me and about half a dozen feet wide, the two arms including an angle of about 60°. When I look from the sun, I see merely dazzling white points. I can easily see some of these dazzling grains fifteen or twenty rods distant on any side, though the facet which reflects the light cannot be more than a tenth or twelfth of an inch at most. Yet I might easily, and commonly do, overlook all this.

Winter comes to make walking possible where there was no walking in summer. Not till winter can we take possession of the whole of our territory. I have three great highways raying out from one centre which is near my door. I may walk down the main river, or up either of its two branches. Could any avenues be contrived more convenient? With the river I am not compelled to walk in the tracks of horses.

Never is there so much light in the air as in one of these bright winter afternoons when all the earth is covered with new-fallen snow, and there is not a cloud in the sky. The sky is much the darkest side, like the bluish lining of an egg-shell. With this white earth beneath, and that spotless, skimmed-milk sky above him, man is but a black speck inclosed in a white egg-shell.

Sometimes, in our prosaic moods, life appears

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to us but a certain number more of days like those we have lived, to be cheered not by more friends and friendship, but probably fewer and less, as perchance we anticipate the end of this day before it is done, close the shutters, and, with a cheerless resignation, commence the barren evening whose fruitless end we clearly see. We despondingly think that all of life which is left is only this experience repeated a certain number of times, and so it would be, if it were not for the faculty of imagination.

The wonderful stillness of a winter day! the sources of sound are, as it were, frozen up. Scarcely a tinkling rill of it is to be heard. When we listen, we hear only that sound of the surf of our internal sea rising and swelling in our ears as in two sea-shells. It is the sabbath of the year, stillness audible, or at most we hear the ice belching and crackling, as if struggling for utterance.

A transient acquaintance with any phenomenon is not sufficient to make it completely the subject of your muse. You must be so conversant with it as to *remember* it, and be reminded of it long afterward, while it lies remotely fair and elysian in the horizon, approachable only by the imagination.

Feb. 13, 1860. . . . It is surprising what a variety of distinct colors the winter can show us,

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using but few pigments. The principal charm of a winter walk over ice is perhaps the peculiar and pure colors exhibited. There is the *red* of the sunset sky and of the snow at evening, and in rainbow flocks during the day, and in sun-dogs.

The *blue* of the sky, and of the ice and water reflected, and of shadows on snow.

The *yellow* of the sun, and the morning and evening sky, and of the sedge (or straw color, bright when lit on the edge of ice at evening), and all these three colors in hoar frost crystals.

Then there is the *purple* of the snow in drifts or on hills, of the mountains, and the clouds at evening.

The *green* of evergreen woods, of the ice and water, and of the sky toward evening.

The *orange* of the sky at evening.

The *white* of snow and clouds, and the *black* of clouds, of water agitated, and water saturating thin snow or ice.

The *russet*, and *brown*, *gray*, etc., of deciduous woods.

The *tawny* of the bare earth.

I suspect that the green and rose (or purple) are not noticed on ice and snow unless it is pretty cold, and perhaps there is less greenness of the ice now than in December when the days

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were shorter. The ice now may be too old and white. . . . The sun being in a cloud, partly obscured, I see a very dark purple tinge on the flat drifts on the ice, earlier than usual, and when afterward the sun comes out below the cloud, I see no purple nor rose. Hence it seems that the twilight has as much or more to do with this phenomenon, supposing the sun to be low, than the slight angle of its rays with the horizon.

Always you have to contend with the stupidity of men. It is like a stiff soil, a hard pan. If you go deeper than usual, you are sure to meet with a pan made harder even by the superficial cultivation. The stupid you have always with you. Men are more obedient at first to words than to ideas. They mind names more than things. Read them a lecture on "Education," naming that subject, and they will think they have heard something important, but call it "Transcendentalism," and they will think it moonshine. Or halve your lecture, and put a psalm at the beginning and a prayer at the end of it, and they will pronounce it good without thinking.

The Scripture rule, "Unto him that hath, shall be given," is true of composition. The more you have thought and written on a given theme, the more you can still write. Thought breeds thought. It grows under your hands.

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Feb. 14, 1840. . . . A very meagre natural history suffices to make me a child. Only their names and genealogy make me love fishes. I would know even the number of their fin rays, and how many scales compose the lateral line. I fancy I am amphibious and swim in all the brooks and pools in the neighborhood, with the perch and bream, or doze under the pads of our river amid the winding aisles and corridors formed by their stems, with the stately pickerel.

Feb. 14, 1841. I am confined to the house by bronchitis, and so seek to content myself with that quiet and serene life there is in a warm corner by the fireside, and see the sky through the chimney-top. Sickness should not be allowed to extend farther than the body. We need only to retreat farther within us, to preserve uninterrupted the continuity of serene hours to the end of our lives. As soon as I find my chest is not of tempered steel, and heart of adamant, I bid good-by to them and look out for a new nature. I will be liable to no accidents.

I shall never be poor while I can command a still hour in which to take leave of my sin.

Feb. 14, 1851. Consider the farmer who is commonly regarded as the healthiest man. He may be the toughest, but he is not the healthiest.

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He has lost his elasticity. He can neither run nor jump. Health is the free use and command of all our faculties, and equal development. His is the health of the ox, an overworked buffalo. His joints are stiff. The resemblance is true even in particulars. He is cast away in a pair of cowhide boots, and travels at an ox's pace. . . . It would do him good to be thoroughly shampooed to make him supple. His health is an insensibility to all influence. But only the healthiest man in the world is sensible to the finest influence; he who is affected by more or less electricity in the air.

We shall see but a little way, if we require to understand what we see. How few things can a man measure with the tape of his understanding! How many greater things might he be seeing in the mean while! One afternoon in the fall, November 21st, I saw Fair Haven Pond with its island and meadow; between the island and the shore, a strip of perfectly smooth water in the lee of the island and two hawks sailing over it, and something more I saw which cannot easily be described, which made me say to myself that the landscape could not be improved. I did not see how it could be improved. Yet I do not know what these things can be. I begin to see such objects only when I leave off understanding them, and afterwards remember

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them. I did not appreciate them before. But I get no farther than this. How adapted these forms and colors to our eyes, a meadow and its islands. What are these things? Yet the hawks and the ducks keep so aloof, and nature is so reserved. We are made to love the river and the meadow, as the wind to ripple the water.

Feb. 14, 1852. . . . I hate that my motive for visiting a friend should be that I want society, that it should lie in my poverty and weakness, and not in his and my riches and strength. His friendship should make me strong enough to do without him.

Feb. 14, 1854. P. M. Down railroad. A moist, thawing, cloudy afternoon, preparing to rain. The telegraph resounds at every post. The first strain from the American lyre. In Stow's wood by the deep Cut, hear the *quah quah* of the white-breasted, black-capped nuthatch. I went up the bank and stood by the fence. A little family of titmice gathered about me searching for their food both on the ground and on the trees with great industry and intentness, now and then pursuing each other. There were two nuthatches at least talking to each other. One hung with his head down on a large pitch pine pecking the bark for a long time, leaden blue above, with a black cap and white breast. It uttered almost constantly a faint but sharp . . .

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creak, difficult to trace home, which appeared to be answered by a baser and louder *quah quah* from the other. A downy woodpecker with the red spot on his hind head and his cassock open behind, showing his white robe, kept up an incessant loud tapping on another pitch pine. All at once, an active little brown creeper makes its appearance, a small, rather slender bird with a long tail and sparrow-colored back, and white beneath. It commences at the bottom of a tree and glides up very rapidly, then suddenly darts to the bottom of a new tree, and repeats the same movement, not resting long in one place, or on one tree. These birds are all feeding and flitting along together, but the chickadees are the most numerous and the most confiding. I observe that three of the four kinds thus associated, viz., the chickadee, nuthatch, and woodpecker, have black crowns, at least the first two, very conspicuous black caps. I cannot but think that this sprightly association and readiness to burst into song have to do with the prospect of spring, more light, and warmth, and thawing weather. The titmice keep up an incessant, faint, tinkling *tchip;* now and then one utters a lively *day-day-day*, and once or twice one commenced a gurgling strain quite novel, startling, and spring-like. Beside this I heard the distant crowing of cocks, and the divine

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humming of the telegraph, all spring-promising sounds. The chickadee has quite a variety of notes. The phœbe one I did not hear to-day.

Feb. 14, 1856. . . . How impatient, how rampant, how precocious these osiers! They have hardly made two shoots from the sand in as many springs, when silvery catkins burst out along them, and anon, golden blossoms and downy seeds, spreading their race with incredible rapidity. Thus they multiply and clan together. Thus they take advantage even of the railroad, which elsewhere disturbs and invades their domains. May I ever be in as good spirits as a willow. They never despair. Is there no moisture longer in Nature which they can transmute into sap? They are emblems of youth, joy, and everlasting life. Scarcely is their growth restrained by winter, but their silvery down peeps forth in the warmest days in January (?).

Feb. 14, 1857. . . . It is a fine, somewhat spring-like day. The ice is softening so that skates begin to cut in, and numerous caterpillars are now crawling about on the ice and snow, the thermometer in the shade N. of house standing at 42°. So it appears that they must often thaw in the course of the winter and find nothing to eat.

Feb. 15, 1840. The good seem to inhale a

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generous atmosphere, and to be bathed in a more precious light than other men. Accordingly, Virgil describes the *sedes beatas* thus,

> Largior hic campos æther et lumine vestit
> Purpureo: Solemque suum, sua sidera nôrunt.

Feb. 15, 1851. Alas! alas! when my friend begins to deal in confessions, breaks silence, makes a theme of friendship (which then is always something past), and descends to merely human relations. As long as there is a spark of love remaining, cherish that alone. Only that can be kindled into a flame. — I thought that friendship, that love was possible between us. I thought that we had not withdrawn very far asunder. But now that my friend rashly, thoughtlessly, profanely speaks, recognizing the distance between us, that distance seems infinitely increased. Of our friends we do not incline to speak, to complain to others; we would not disturb the foundations of confidence that may still be.

Why should we not still continue to live with the intensity and rapidity of infants? Is not the world, are not the heavens, as unfathomed as ever? Have we exhausted any joy, any sentiment?

Feb. 15, 1852. Perhaps I am descended from the Northman named "Thorer, the Dog-footed." Thorer Hund, to judge from his name, belonged

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to the same family. "He was one of the most powerful men in the north." Thorer is one of the most common names in the chronicles of the Northmen, if not the most so.

Feb. 15, 1855. . . . All day a steady, warm, imprisoning rain, carrying off the snow, not unmusical on my roof. It is a rare time for the student and reader who cannot go abroad in the P. M., provided he can keep awake, for we are wont to be as drowsy as cats in such weather. Without, it is not walking, but wading. It is so long since I have heard it, that the steady rushing, soaking sound of the rain on the shingles is musical. The fire needs no replenishing, and we save our fuel. It seems like a distant forerunner of spring. It is because I am allied to the elements that the sound of the rain is thus soothing to me. This sound sinks into my spirit, as the water into the earth, reminding me of the season when snow and ice will be no more, when the earth will be thawed, and drink up the rain as fast as it falls.

Feb. 15, 1858. To Cambridge and Boston. Saw at a menagerie a Canada lynx, said to have been taken at the White Mountains. It looked much like a monstrous gray cat standing on stilts, with its tail cut to five inches, a tuft of hair on each ear, and a ruff under the throat.

Feb. 15, 1861. . . . A kitten is so flexible

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that she is almost double. The hind parts are equivalent to another kitten with which the fore part plays. She does not discover that her tail belongs to her till you tread upon it. How eloquent she can be with her tail. She jumps into a chair and then stands on her hind legs to look out the window, looks steadily at objects far and near, first gazing this side, then that, for she loves to look out a window as much as any gossip. Ever and anon she bends back her ears to hear what is going on within the room, and all the while her eloquent tail is reporting the progress and success of her survey by speaking gestures. . . . Then what a delicate hint she can give with her tail, passing perhaps underneath as you sit at table, and letting the tip of her tail just touch your legs, as much as to say I am here and ready for that milk or meat, though she may not be so forward as to look round at you when she emerges. — Only skin deep lies the feral nature of the cat unchanged still. I just had the misfortune to rock on to our cat's legs, as she was lying playfully spread out under my chair. Imagine the sound that arose, and which was excusable, but what will you say to the fierce growls and flashing eyes with which she met me for a quarter of an hour thereafter. No tiger in its jungle could have been savager.

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Feb. 16, 1841. For how slight an accident shall two noble souls wait to bring them together.

Feb. 16, 1852. It is interesting to meet an ox with handsomely spreading horns. There is a great variety of sizes and forms, though one horn commonly matches the other. I am willing to turn out for those that spread their branches wide. Large and spreading horns, I fancy, indicate a certain vegetable force and naturalization in the wearer; they soften and ease off the distinction between the animal and the vegetable, the unhorned animals and the trees. . . . The deer that run in the woods, as the moose, for instance, carry perfect trees on their heads. The French call them "bois." No wonder there are fables of centaurs and the like. No wonder there is a story of a hunter who when his bullets failed fired cherry stones into the heads of his game and so trees sprouted out of them, and the hunter refreshed himself with the cherries. It is a perfect piece of mythology which belongs to these days. Oxen, which are deanimalized, to some extent, approach nearer to the vegetable, perchance, than bulls and cows, and hence their bulky bodies, and large and spreading horns. Nothing more natural than that a deer should appear with a tree growing out of his head.

Feb. 16, 1854. By this time in the winter I

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do not look for those clear sparkling mornings and delicate leaf frosts which seem to belong to the earlier part of the winter, as if the air were now somewhat tarnished and debauched, had lost its virgin purity.

Every judgment and action of a man qualifies every other, *i. e.*, corrects our estimation of every other, as, for instance, a man's idea of immortality who is a member of a church, or his praise of you coupled with his praise of those whom you do not esteem. For, in this sense, a man is awfully consistent above his own consciousness. All a man's strength and all his weakness go to make up the authority of any particular opinion which he may utter. . . . If he is your friend, you may have to consider that he loves you, but perchance he also loves gingerbread. . . .

Columella, after saying that many authors had believed that the climate, *qualitatem cœli statumque*, was changed by lapse of time, *longo ævi situ*, refers to Hipparchus as having given out that the time would be when the poles of the earth would be moved from their places, *tempus fore quo cardines mundi loco moverentur;* and as confirmatory of this, he, Columella, goes on to say that the vine and olive flourish now in some places where formerly they failed. He gives the names of about fifty authors who had treated *de rusticis rebus* before him.

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Feb. 16, 1857. . . . I perceive that some (commonly talented) persons are enveloped and confined by a certain crust of manners, which, though it may sometimes be a fair and transparent enamel, yet only repels and saddens the beholder, since by its rigidity it seems to repress all further expansion. They are viewed as at a distance, like an insect under a tumbler. They have, as it were, prematurely hardened both seed and shell, and this has severely taxed, if not put a period to, the life of the plant. This is to stand upon your dignity. . . . Such persons are after all but hardened sinners in a mild sense. The pearl is a hardened sinner. Manners get to be human parchment, in which sensible books are often bound and honorable titles engrossed, though they may be very stiff and dry.

Feb. 16, 1859. From the entrance of the mill road, I look back through the sunlight, this soft afternoon, to some white pine tops near Jenny Dugan's. Their flattish boughs rest stratum above stratum like a cloud, a green mackerel sky, hardly reminding me of the concealed earth so far beneath. They are like a flaky crust of the earth, a more ethereal, terebinthine, evergreen earth. It occurs to me that my eyes rest on them with the same pleasure as do those of the henhawk which has been nestled in them. My eyes nibble the piny sierra which makes

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the horizon's edge as a hungry man nibbles a cracker. The henhawk and the pine are friends. The same thing which keeps the henhawk in the woods, away from cities, keeps me here. That bird settles with confidence on a white pine top, and not upon your weather-cock. That bird will not be poultry of yours, lays no eggs for you, forever hides its nest. Though *willed* or *wild*, it is not willful in its wildness. The unsympathizing man regards the wildness of some animals, their strangeness to him, as a sin, as if all their virtue consisted in their tamableness. He has always a charge in his gun ready for their extermination. What we call wildness is a civilization other than our own. The henhawk shuns the farmer, but it seeks the friendly shelter and support of the pine. It will not consent to walk in the barnyard, but it loves to soar above the clouds. It has its own way and is beautiful when we would fain subject it to our will. So any surpassing work of art is strange and wild to the mass of men, as is genius itself. No hawk that soars and steals our poultry is wilder than genius, and none is more persecuted or above persecution. It can never be poet laureate, to say, "Pretty Poll," and "Polly want a cracker."

Feb. 17, 1841. Our work should be fitted to and lead on the time, as bud, flower, and fruit

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lead the circle of the seasons. — The mechanic works no longer than his labor will pay for lights, fuel, and shop rent. Would it not be well for us to consider if our deed will warrant the expense of nature? Will it maintain the sun's light? — Our actions do not use time independently, as the bud does. They should constitute its lapse. It is their room. But they shuffle after and serve the hour.

Feb. 17, 1852. Perhaps the peculiar attractiveness of those western vistas was partly owing to the shortness of the days, when we naturally look to the heavens and make the most of the little light, when we live an arctic life, when the woodchopper's axe reminds us of twilight at three o'clock in the afternoon, when the morning and the evening literally make the whole day, when we travel as it were through the portals of the night, and the way is narrow as well as blocked with snow, when, too, the sun has the least opportunity to fill the air with vapor. . . .

If you would read books on botany, go to the fathers of the science. Read Linnæus at once, and come down from him as far as you please. I lost much time reading the florists. It is remarkable how little the mass of those interested in botany are acquainted with Linnæus. I doubt if his "Philosophia Botanica," which Rousseau, Sprengel, and others praised so highly, has

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ever been translated into English. It is simpler, more easy to understand, than any of the hundred manuals to which it has given birth. A few pages of cuts representing the different parts of plants, with their botanical names attached, are worth whole volumes of explanation. According to the classification of Linnæus, I come under the head of Miscellaneous Botanophilists. "Botanophili sunt qui varia de vegetabilibus tradiderunt, licet ea non proprie ad scientiam Botanicam spectant."

Feb. 17, 1854. P. M. To Gowing's Swamp. . . . The mice tracks are very amusing. It is surprising how numerous they are, and yet I rarely see a mouse. They must be nocturnal in their habits. Any tussocky ground is scored with them. I see, too, where they have run over the ice on the swamp (there is a mere sugaring of snow on it), ever trying to make an entrance, to get beneath it. You see deep and distinct channels in the snow in some places, as if a whole colony had long traveled to and fro in them, a highway, a well-known trail, but suddenly they will come to an end. And yet they have not dived beneath the surface, for you see where the single traveler who did it all has nimbly hopped along, as if suddenly scared, making but a slight impression, squirrel-like, in the snow. The squirrel also, though rarely, will

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make a channel for a short distance. . . . I suspect that the mice sometimes build their nests in bushes from the foundation, for . . . where I found two mice nests last fall, I find one begun with a very few twigs and some moss, close by where the others were, at the same height, and also on Prinos bushes, plainly the work of mice wholly.

Feb. 18, 1838. . . . I had not been out long to-day when it seemed that a new spring was already born; not quite weaned, it is true, but verily entered upon existence. Nature struck up "the same old song in the grass," despite eighteen inches of snow. . . .

Feb. 18, 1840. All romance is grounded on friendship. What is this rural, this pastoral, this poetic life but its invention? Does not the moon shine for Endymion? Smooth pastures and mild airs are for some Coridon and Phyllis. Paradise belongs to Adam and Eve. Plato's Republic is governed by Platonic love.

Feb. 18, 1841. . . . My recent growth does not appear in any visible new talent; but its deed will enter into my gaze when I look into the sky or vacancy. It will help me to consider ferns and everlasting.

Man is like a tree which is limited to no age, but grows as long as it has its root in the ground. We have only to live in the alburnum, and not in the old wood.

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A man is the hydrostatic paradox, the counterpoise of the system. You have studied flowers and birds cheaply enough, but you must lay yourself out to buy him.

Feb. 18, 1852. . . . I have a commonplace book for facts, and another for poetry, but I find it difficult always to preserve the vague distinction which I had in my mind, for the most interesting and beautiful facts are so much the more poetry, and that is their success. They are translated from earth to heaven. I see that if my facts were sufficiently vital and significant, perhaps transmuted more into the substance of the human mind, I should need but one book of poetry to contain them all.

It is impossible for the same person to see things from the poet's point of view and that of the man of science. The poet's second love may be science (not his first), when use has worn off the bloom. I realize that men may be born to a condition of mind at which others arrive in middle age by the decay of their poetic faculties.

Feb. 18, 1854. . . . It is a little affecting to walk over the hills now, looking at the reindeer lichens here and there amid the snow, and remember that erelong we shall find violets also in their midst. What an odds the season makes! The birds know it; whether a rose-tinted water lily is sailing amid the pads, or neighbor Hob-

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son is getting out his ice with a cross-cut saw, while his oxen are eating their stalks. I noticed that the ice which Garrison cut the other day contained the lily pads and stems within it. How different their environment now from when the queenly flower, floating on the trembling surface, exhaled its perfume amid a cloud of insects! . . .

What a contrast between the upper and under side of many leaves, the indurated and colored upper side, and the tender, more or less colorless under side, male and female, even when they are almost equally exposed. The under side is commonly white, however, as turned away from the light toward the earth. Many in which the contrast is finest are narrow, revolute leaves, like the delicate and beautiful *Andromeda Polifolia*, the ledum, *Kalmia glauca*. . . . The handsome lanceolate leaves of the *Andromeda Polifolia*, dark, but pure and uniform dull red above, strongly revolute, and of a delicate bluish-white beneath, deserve to be copied on works of art.

Feb. 18, 1857. . . . P. M. The frost out of the ground and the ways settled in many places. . . . I am excited by this wonderful air, and go listening for the note of the bluebird or other comer. The very grain of the air seems to have undergone a change, and is ready to split into the form of the bluebird's warble. Methinks if

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it were visible, or I could cast up some fine dust which would betray it, it would take a corresponding shape. The bluebird does not come till the air consents, and his wedge will enter easily. . . .

What a poem is this of spring, so often repeated! I am thrilled when I hear it spoken of as the Spring of such a year, that Fytte of the glorious epic.

Feb. 18, 1860. . . . I think the most important requisite in describing an animal is to be sure that you give its character and spirit, for in that you have, without error, the sum and effect of all its parts, known and unknown. You must tell what it is to man. Surely the most important part of an animal is its *anima*, its vital spirit, on which is based its character, and all the particulars by which it most concerns us. Yet most scientific books which treat of animals leave this out altogether, and what they describe are, as it were, phenomena of dead matter. What is most interesting in a dog, for instance, is his attachment to his master, his intelligence, courage, and the like, and not his anatomical structure, and even many habits which affect us less. If you have undertaken to write the biography of an animal, you must present to us the *living* creature, *i. e.*, a result which no man can understand. He can only, in his degree, report

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the impression made by it on him. Science, in many departments of Natural History, does not pretend to go beyond the shell, *i. e.*, it does not get to animated nature at all. A history of animated nature must itself be animated. The ancients, one would say, with their Gorgons, Sphinxes, Satyrs, Mantichora, etc., could imagine more than existed, while the moderns cannot imagine so much as exists.

We are as often injured as benefited by our systems, for, in fact, no human system is a true one. A name is at most a convenience, and carries no information with it. As soon as I begin to be aware of the life of any creature, I forget its name. When we have learned to distinguish creatures, the sooner we forget their names the better, so far as any true appreciation of them is concerned. I think, therefore, that the best and most harmless names are those which are an imitation of the voice or note of an animal, as they are the most poetic ones. But the name adheres only to the accepted and conventional bird or quadruped, never an instant to the real one. There is always something ridiculous in the name of a great man, as if he were named John Smith. The name is convenient in communicating with others, but it is not to be remembered when I communicate with myself.

If you look over a list of medicinal recipes in

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vogue in the last century, how foolish and useless they are seen to be, and yet we use equally absurd ones with faith to-day.

Feb. 19, 1841. A truly good book . . . teaches me better than to read it. I must soon lay it down, and commence living on its hint. I do not see how any can be written more, but this is the last effusion of genius. . . . It is slipping out of my fingers while I read. It creates no atmosphere in which it may be perused, but one in which its teachings may be practiced. It confers on me such wealth that I lay it down with the least regret. What I began by reading, I must finish by acting. So I cannot stay to hear a good sermon, and applaud at the conclusion, but shall be half-way to Thermopylæ before that.

We linger in manhood to tell the dreams of our childhood, and they are half forgotten ere we acquire the faculty of expressing them.

It is the unexplored grandeur of the storm which keeps up the spirits of the traveler. When I contemplate a hard and bare life in the woods, I find my last consolation in its untrivialness. Shipwreck is less distressing because the breakers do not trifle with us. We are resigned as long as we recognize the sober and solemn mystery of nature. The dripping mariner finds consolation and sympathy in the infinite sublim-

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ity of the storm. It is a moral force as well as he. With courage he can lay down his life on the strand, for it never turned a deaf ear to him, nor has he ever exhausted its sympathy.

In the love of narrow souls I make many short voyages, but in vain. I find no sea room But in great souls, I sail before the wind without a watch, and never reach the shore.

Feb. 19, 1852. The sky appears broader now than it did. The day has opened its eyelids wider. The lengthening of the days, commenced a good while ago, is a kind of forerunner of the spring. Of course it is then that the ameliorating cause begins to work.

To White Pond. . . . The strains from my muse are as rare nowadays or of late years as the notes of birds in the winter, the faintest occasional tinkling sound, and mostly of the woodpecker kind, or the harsh jay, or the crow. It never melts into a song, only the *day-day-day* of an inquisitive titmouse.

Everywhere snow, gathered into sloping drifts about the walls and fences, and beneath the snow the frozen ground, and men are compelled to deposit the summer's provision in burrows in the earth, like the ground squirrel. Many creatures, daunted by the prospect, migrated in the fall, but man remains, and walks over the frozen snow crust, and over the stiff

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ened rivers and ponds, and draws now upon his summer stores. Life is reduced to its lowest terms. There is no home for you now in this freezing wind, but in that shelter which you prepared in the summer. You steer straight across the fields to that in season. I can with difficulty tell when I am over the river. There is a similar crust over my heart. Where I rambled in the summer, and gathered flowers, and rested on the grass by the brook side in the shade, now no grass, nor flowers, nor brook, nor shade, but cold unvaried snow, stretching mile after mile, and no place to sit. Look at White Pond, that crystal drop that was, in which the umbrageous shore was reflected, and schools of fabulous perch and shiners rose to the surface, and where with difficulty you made your way along the pebbly shore in a summer afternoon, to the bathing place. Now you stalk rapidly across where it was, muffled in your cloak, over a more level snow field than usual, furrowed by the wind; its finny inhabitants and its pebbly shore all hidden and forgotten, and you would shudder at the thought of wetting your feet in it.

A fine display of the northern lights after ten P. M., flashing up from all parts of the horizon to the zenith, where there was a kind of core formed, stretching S.S.E. N.N.W., surrounded by what looked like a permanent white cloud,

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which, however, was very variable in form. The light flashes or trembles upward, as if it were the light of the sun reflected from a frozen mist in the upper atmosphere.

Feb. 19, 1854. . . . To Fair Haven by river, back by railroad. . . . The large moths apparently love the neighborhood of water, and are wont to suspend their cocoons over the edge of the meadow and river, places more or less inaccessible to men, at least. I saw a button-bush with what, at first sight, looked like the open pods of the locust or of the water asclepias, attached. They were the light, ash-colored cocoons of the Attacus Promethea, with the completely withered and faded leaves wrapped around them, carefully and admirably secured to the twigs by fine silk wound round the leaf stalk and the twig. They add nothing to the strength of the cocoon, being deciduous, but aid in deception. They are taken at a little distance for a few curled and withered leaves left on. Though the particular twigs on which you find some cocoons may never, or very rarely, retain any leaves, there are enough leaves left on other shrubs and trees to warrant the adoption of this disguise. Yet it is startling to think that the inference has in this case been drawn by some mind, that as most other plants retain some leaves, the walker will suspect these also to.

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Each and all such disguises and other resources remind us that not merely some poor worm's instinct, as we call it, but the mind of the universe rather, which we share, has been intended upon each particular object. All the wit in the world was brought to bear on each case to secure its end. It was long ago in a full senate of all intellects determined how cocoons had best be suspended. Kindred mind with mine, that approves and admires, decided it so. . . .

Much study, a weariness of the flesh, eh? But did they not intend that we should read and ponder, who covered the whole earth with alphabets, primers, or Bibles, coarse or fine print? The very débris of the cliffs . . . are covered with geographic lichens. No surface is permitted to be bare long. . . . Was not he who creates lichens the abettor of Cadmus when he invented letters? Types almost arrange themselves into words and sentences, as dust arranges itself under the magnet. Print! it is a close-hugging lichen that forms on a favorable surface, which paper offers. The linen gets itself wrought into paper that the song of the shirt may be printed on it. Who placed us with eyes between a microscopic and a telescopic world?

Feb. 19, 1855. Many will complain of my lectures that they are transcendental, can't under-

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stand them. "Would you have us return to the savage state?" etc., etc., a criticism true enough, it may be, from their point of view. But the fact is, the earnest lecturer can speak only to his like, and adapting himself to his audience is a mere compliment which he pays them. If you wish to know how I think, you must endeavor to put yourself in my place. If you wish me to speak as if I were you, that is another affair.

Feb. 19, 1857. A man cannot be said to succeed in this life who does not satisfy one friend.

Feb. 19, 1858. The traveler is defended and calloused. He deals with surfaces, has a great coat on; but he who stays at home and writes about homely things gives us naked and tender thoughts and sentiments.

Feb. 20, 1840. The coward's hope is suspicion; the hero's doubt, a sort of hope. The gods neither hope nor doubt.

Feb. 20, 1841. When I am going out for an evening, I arrange the fire in my stove so that I do not fail to find a good one when I return, though it would have engaged my frequent attention, present; so that when I know I am to be at home, I sometimes make believe that I may go out to save trouble. And this is the art of living, too, to leave our life in a condition to go alone, and not to require a constant supervis-

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ion. We will then sit down serenely to live, as by the side of a stove.

When I sit in earnest, nothing must stand. All must be sedentary with me.

I hear the faint sound of a viol and voices from the neighboring cottage, and think to myself, I will believe the muse only forevermore. It assures me that no gleam which comes over the serene soul is deceptive. It warns me of a reality and substance of which the best that I see is but the phantom and shadow. O Music, thou tellest me of things of which memory takes no heed; thy strains are whispered aside from memory's ear. . . . Thou openest all my senses to catch the least hint, and givest me no thought. It would be good to sit at my door of summer evenings forever, and hear thy strains. Thou makest me to toy with speech, or walk content without it. . . . I am pleased to think how ignorant and shiftless the wisest are.

My imperfect sympathies with my friend are a cheerful, glimmering light in the valley.

Feb. 20, 1842. I never yet saw two men sufficiently great to meet as two. In proportion as they are great, the differences are fatal, because they are felt not to be partial, but total. Frankness to him who is unlike me will lead to the utter denial of him. . . . When two approach to meet, they incur no petty dangers;

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they run terrible risks. Between the sincere there will be no civilities. No greatness seems prepared for the little decorums; even savage unmannerliness it meets from equal greatness.

My path hitherto has been like a road through a diversified country, now climbing high mountains, then descending into the lowest vales. From the summits I saw the heavens, from the vales I looked up at the heights again. In prosperity I remember God, or memory is one with consciousness; in adversity I remember my own elevation, and only hope to see God again. . . .

The death of friends should inspire us as much as their lives. If they are great and rich enough, they will leave consolation to the mourners before the expenses of their funerals. It will not be hard to part with worth, because it is worthy. How can any good depart? It does not go and come, but we.

Feb. 20, 1856. P. M. Up Assabet. See a broad and distinct otter trail made last night or yesterday. It came out to the river through the low woods N. of Pinxter swamp, making a very conspicuous trail from seven to nine or ten inches wide and three or four deep, with sometimes singularly upright sides, as if a square timber had been drawn along, but commonly rounded. It made some short turns and zigzags, passed under limbs which were only five inches above

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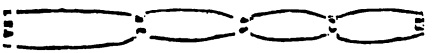
the snow, not over them, had apparently slid down all banks and declivities, making a uniform, broad, hollow trail there, without any marks of its feet. On reaching the river, it had come along under the bank, from time to time looking into the crevices, where it might get under the ice, sometimes ascending the bank and sliding back. On level ground its trail had this appearance  . . . tracks of feet twenty to twenty-four inches apart, but sometimes there was no track of the feet for twenty-five feet, frequently for six. In the last case there was a swelling in the outline as above. . . . It entered a hole under the ice at Assabet spring, from which it has not issued.

Feb. 20, 1857. What is the relation between a bird and the ear that appreciates its melody, to whom, perchance, it is more charming and significant than to any one else? Certainly they are intimately related, and the one was made for the other. It is a natural fact. If I were to discover that a certain kind of stone by the pond shore was affected, say partially disintegrated, by a particular natural sound, as of a bird or insect, I see that one could not be completely described without describing the other. I am that stone by the pond side.

What is hope, what is expectation, but a seed

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time whose harvest cannot fail, an irresistible expedition of the mind, at length to be victorious?

Feb. 20, 1859. Have just read "Counterparts, or the Cross of Love," by the author of "Charles Auchester." It is very interesting, its illustration of Love and Friendship, as showing how much we can know of each other through sympathy merely, without any of the ordinary information. You know about a person who deeply interests you more than you can be told. A look, a gesture, an act, which to everybody else is insignificant, tells you more about that one than words can. . . . If he wished to conceal something from you, it would be apparent. It is as if a bird told you. . . . Sometimes from the altered manner of a friend which no cloak can possibly conceal, we know that something has happened, and what it was, all the essential particulars, though it would be a long story to tell, though it may involve the agency of four or five persons, who never breathed it to you, yet you are sure as if you detected all their tracks in the wood. You are the more sure, because, in the case of love, effects follow their causes more inevitably than usual, this being a controlling power.

How much the writer lives and endures in coming before the public so often! A few years or books are with him equal to a long life of ex-

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perience, suffering, etc. It is well if he does not become hardened. He learns how to bear contempt, and to despise himself. He makes, as it were, a post-mortem examination of himself before he is dead. Such is art.

Feb. 21, 1842. . . . I must confess there is nothing so strange to me as my own body. I love any other piece of nature, almost, better.

I was always conscious of sounds in nature which my ears could not hear, that I caught but a prelude to a strain. She always retreats as I advance. Away behind and behind is she and her meaning. Will not this faith and expectation make itself ears at length? I never saw to the end, nor heard to the end, but the best part was unseen and unheard.

I am like a feather floating in the atmosphere. On every side is depth unfathomable.

I have lived ill [of late] for the most part, because too near myself. I have tripped myself up, so that there was no progress for my own narrowness. I cannot walk conveniently and pleasantly but when I hold myself far off in the horizon, but when the soul dilutes the body and makes it passable. My soul and body have tottered along together, . . . tripping and hindering one another, like unpracticed Siamese twins. They two should walk as one that no obstacle may be nearer than the firmament.

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There must be some narrowness in the soul that compels one to have secrets.

Feb. 21, 1855. . . . A clear air, with a northwesterly March-like wind, as yesterday. What is the peculiarity in the air that both the invalid in his chamber and the traveler on the highway say, "These are perfect March days"? The wind is rapidly drying up the earth, and elevated sands already begin to look whitish. How much light there is in the sky and on the surface of the russet earth! It is reflected in a flood from all cleansed surfaces which rain and snow have washed, from the railroad rails, the mica on the rocks and the silvery latebræ of insects there, and I never saw the white houses of the village more brightly white. Now look for an early crop of arrowheads, for they will shine. When I have entered the wooded hollow on the east of the Deep Cut, it is novel and pleasant to hear the sound of the dry leaves and twigs, which have so long been damp and silent, crackling again under my feet, though there is still considerable snow along wall-sides, etc., and to see the holes and galleries recently made by the mice (?) in the fine withered grass of such places. I see the peculiar softened blue sky of spring over the tops of the pines, and when I am sheltered from the wind I feel the warmer sun of the season reflected from the withered

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grass and twigs on the side of this elevated hollow. . . . When the leaves on the forest floor are dried and begin to rustle under such a sun and wind as these, the news is told to how many myriads of grubs that underlie them! When I perceive this dryness under my feet, I feel as if I had got a new sense, or rather I realize what was incredible to me before, that there is a new life in nature beginning to awake. . . . It is whispered through all the aisles of the forest that another spring is approaching. The wood mouse listens at the mouth of his burrow, and the chickadee passes the news along. We now notice the snow on the mountains, because on the remote rim of the horizon its whiteness contrasts with the russet and darker hues of our bare fields. I looked at the Peterboro mountains, with my glass, from Fair Haven hill. I think there can be no more arctic scene than these mountains, on the edge of the horizon, completely crusted over with snow, the sun shining on them, seen through a telescope over bare russet fields and dark forests, with perhaps a house on some bare ridge seen against them. They look like great loaves incrusted with pure white sugar, and I think this must have been the origin of the name "sugar-loaf" sometimes given to mountains, and not their form. We look thus from russet fields into a landscape still sleeping under

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the mantle of winter. The snow on the mountains has, in this case, a singular smooth and crusty appearance, and by contrast you see even single evergreens rising here and there above it; and where a promontory casts a shadow along the mountain side, I saw what looked like a large lake of misty, bluish water on the side of the farther Peterboro mountain, its edges or shore very distinctly defined. This I concluded was the shadow of another part of the mountain, and it suggested that in like manner what on the surface of the moon is taken for water may be shadows.

Feb. 21, 1860. . . . It was their admiration of nature that made the ancients attribute those magnanimous qualities, which are rarely to be found in man, to the lion, as her masterpiece. It is only by a readiness or preparedness to see more than appears in a creature that we can appreciate what is manifest.

Feb. 21, 1861. . . . This plucking and stripping of a pine cone is a business which he [the squirrel] and his family understand perfectly. . . . He does not prick his fingers, nor pitch his whiskers, nor gnaw the solid cone any more than he needs to. Having sheared off the twigs and needles that may be in his way (for, like a skillful wood-chopper, he first secures room and verge enough), he neatly cuts off the stout stem

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of the cone with a few strokes of his chisels, and it is his. To be sure, he may let it fall to the ground, and look down at it for a moment curiously, as if it were not his. But he is taking note where it lies, that he may add it to his heap of a hundred more like it, and it is only so much the more his for his seeming carelessness. And when he comes to open it, observe how he proceeds. He holds it in his hands a solid embossed cone, so hard it almost rings at the touch of his teeth. He pauses for a moment, perhaps, but it is not because he does not know how to begin. He only listens to hear what is in the wind. He knows better than to cut off the top, and work his way downward against a *cheval-de-frise* of advanced scales and prickles, or to gnaw into the side for three quarters of an inch in the face of many armed shields. He whirls it bottom upward in a twinkling, where the scales are smallest and the prickles slight or none, and the short stem is cut so close as not to be in his way, and there he proceeds to cut through the thin and tender bases of the scales, and each stroke tells, laying bare at once a couple of seeds. Thus he strips it as easily as if its scales were chaff, and so rapidly, twirling it as he advances, that you cannot tell how he does it till you drive him off, and inspect his unfinished work. If there ever was an age of the world when the

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squirrels opened their cones at the wrong end, it was not the golden age, at any rate.

Feb. 22, 1841. . . . Friends will be much apart. They will respect more each other's privacy than their communion, for therein is the fulfillment of our high aims and the conclusion of our arguments. That we know and would associate with, not only has high intents, but goes on high errands, and has much private business. The hours my friend devotes to me were snatched from a higher society. He is hardly a gift level to me, but I have to reach up to take it. . . .

We have to go into retirement religiously, and enhance our meeting by rarity and a degree of unfamiliarity. Would you know why I see thee so seldom, my friend? In solitude I have been making up a packet for thee.

Some actions which grow out of common but natural relations affect me strangely, as sometimes the behavior of a mother to her children. So quiet and noiseless an action often moves me more than many sounding exploits.

Feb. 22, 1852. . . . Every man will take such views as he can afford to take. Views one would think were the most expensive guests to entertain. I perceive that the reason my neighbor cannot entertain certain views is the narrow limits within which he is obliged to live on account of the smallness of his means. His

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instinct tells him that it will not do to relax his hold here, and take hold where he cannot keep hold.

Feb. 22, 1855. . . . J. Farmer showed me an ermine weasel he caught in a trap three or four weeks ago. They are not very uncommon about his barns. All white but the tip of the tail. Two conspicuous canine teeth in each jaw. In summer they are distinguished from the red weasel, which is a little smaller, by the length of their tails particularly, six or more inches, while the red one's is not more than two inches long. . . . He had seen a partridge drum standing on a wall; said it stood very upright, and produced the sound by striking its wings together behind its back, as a cock often does, but did not strike the wall nor its body. This he is sure of, and declares that he is mistaken who affirms the contrary, though it were Audubon himself. Wilson says he "begins to strike with his stiffened wings," while standing on a log, but does not say what he strikes, though one would infer it was either the log or his body. Peabody says he beats his body with his wings.

Feb. 22, 1856. . . . Now first, the snow melting and the ice beginning to soften, I see those slender, grayish-winged insects creeping with closed wings over the snow-clad ice. Have seen none before this winter. They are on all

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parts of the river, of all sizes, from one third of an inch to an inch long; are to be seen every warm day afterward.

Feb. 23, 1841. . . . There is a subtle elixir in society which makes it a fountain of health to the sick. We want no consolation which is not the overflow of our friend's health. We will have no condolence, who are not dolent ourselves. We would have our friend come and respire healthily before us with the fragrance of many meadows and heaths in his breath, and we will inhabit his body while our own recruits. — Nothing is so good medicine in sickness as to witness some nobleness in another which will advertise us of health. In sickness it is our faith that ails, and noble deeds reassure us.

That anybody has thought of you on some indifferent occasion frequently implies more good will than you had reason to expect. You have henceforth a stronger motive for conduct. We do not know how many amiable thoughts are current.

Feb. 23, 1842. . . . True politeness is only hope and trust in men. It never addresses a fallen or falling man, but salutes a rising generation. It does not flatter, but only congratulates.

Feb. 23, 1853. . . . I think myself in a wilder country, and a little nearer to primitive times,

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when I read in old books which spell the word savages with an *l* (salvages), like John Smith's "General Historie of Virginia," etc., reminding me of the derivation of the word from *sylva*, some of the wild wood and its bristling branches still left in their language. The savages they describe are really salvages, men of the woods.

Feb. 23, 1854. A. M. The snow drives horizontally from the north or northwesterly in long waving lines like the outline of a swell or billow.

P. M. Saw some of those architectural drifts forming. The fine snow came driving along over the field like steam curling from a roof. As the current rises to go over the wall, it produces a lull in the angle made by the wall and the ground, and accordingly just enough snow is deposited there to fill the triangular calm, but the greater part passes over, and is deposited in the larger calm. A portion of the wind also apparently passes through the chinks of the wall, and curves upward against the main drift, appearing to carve it, and perforate it in various fashions, holding many snowy particles in suspension, in vertical eddies. I am not sure to what extent the drift is carved and perforated, and how far the snow is originally deposited in these forms.

Feb. 23, 1855. Mr. Loring says that he and

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his son George fired at white swans in Texas on the water, and though George shot two with ball, and killed them, the others in each case gathered about them, and crowded them off out of their reach.

Feb. 23, 1856. . . . I read in the papers that the ocean is frozen, or has been lately, on the back side of Cape Cod, at the Highland Light, one mile out from the shore (not to bear or walk on probably), a phenomenon which, it is said, the oldest have not witnessed before.

Feb. 23, 1857. P. M. See two yellow-spotted tortoises in the ditch S. of Trillium wood. You saunter expectant in the mild air along the soft edge of a ditch filled with melted snow, and paved with leaves in some sheltered place, yet perhaps with some ice at one end still, and are thrilled to see stirring mid the leaves at the bottom, sluggishly burying themselves from your sight again, these brilliantly spotted creatures. There are commonly two, at least. The tortoise is stirring in the ditches again. In your latest spring, they still look incredibly strange when first seen, and not like cohabitants and contemporaries of yours.

I say in my thought to my neighbor who was once my friend, It is of no use to speak the truth to you. You will not hear it. What then shall I say to you?

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At the instant that I seem to be saying farewell forever to one who has been my friend, I find myself unexpectedly near to him, and it is our very nearness and dearness to each other that gives depth and significance to that "forever." Thus I am a helpless prisoner, and these chains I have no skill to break. While I think I have broken one link, I have been forging another. — I have not yet known a Friendship to cease, I think. I fear I have experienced its decaying. Morning, noon, and night, I suffer a physical pain, an aching of the breast which unfits me for my tasks. It is perhaps most intense at evening. With respect to Friendship I feel like a wreck that is driving before the gale, with a crew suffering from hunger and thirst, not knowing what shore, if any, they may reach, so long have I breasted the conflicting waves of this sentinent, my seams open and my timbers laid bare. I float on Friendship's sea simply because my specific gravity is less than its, but no longer that stanch and graceful vessel that careened so buoyantly over it. My planks and timbers are scattered. At most I hope to make a sort of raft of Friendship on which with a few of our treasures we may float to some firm land. — That aching of the breast, the grandest pain that man endures, which no ether can assuage!

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You cheat me, you keep me at a distance with your manners. I know of no other dishonesty, no other devil. Why this doubleness, these compliments? They are the worst of lies. A lie is not worse between traders than a compliment between friends. I would not, I cannot speak. I will let you *feel* my thought, my feeling. — Friends! They are united for good, for evil. They can delight each other as none other can. Lying on lower levels is but a trivial offense compared with civility and compliments on the level of Friendship.

I visit my friend for joy, not for disturbance. If my coming hinders him in the least conceivable degree, I will exert myself to the utmost to stay away. I will get the Titans to help me stand aloof, will labor night and day to construct a rampart between us. If my coming casts but the shadow of a shadow before it, I will retreat swifter than the wind, and more untrackable. I will be gone irrevocably, if possible, before he fears that I am coming.

If the teeth ache, they can be pulled. If the heart aches, what then? Shall we pluck it out?

Must friends then expect the fate of those oriental twins, that one shall at last bear about the corpse of the other, by that same ligature that bound him to a living companion?

Look before you leap. Let the isthmus be

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cut through, unless sea meets sea at exactly the same level, unless a perfect understanding and equilibrium has been established from the beginning around Cape Horn and that unnamed northern cape, what a tumult! It is Atlantic and Atlantic, or Atlantic and Pacific.

I have seen signs of the spring. I have seen a frog swiftly sinking in a pool, or where he dimpled the surface as he leapt in, I have seen the brilliant spotted tortoise stirring at the bottom of ditches, I have seen the clear sap trickling from the red maple.

Feb. 23, 1859. [Worcester.] P. M. Walk to Quinsigamond Pond, where was good skating yesterday, but this very pleasant and warm day it is suddenly quite too soft. I was just saying to Blake that I should look for hard ice in the shade or on the N. side of some wooded hill close to the shore, though skating was out of the question elsewhere, when looking up I saw a gentleman and lady very gracefully gyrating, and, as it were, courtesying to each other, in a small bay under such a hill on the opposite shore of the pond. Intervening bushes and shore concealed the ice, so that their swift and graceful motions, their bodies inclined at various angles, as they gyrated forward and backward about a small space, looking as if they would hit each other, reminded me of the circling of two

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winged insects in the air, or hawks receding and approaching.

I first hear and then see eight or ten bluebirds going over.

Feb. 23, 1860. 3 P. M. Thermometer 58° and snow almost gone, river rising. We have not had so warm a day since the beginning of December, which was unusually warm. I walk over the moist Nawshawtuck hillside, and see the green radical leaves of the buttercup, shepherd's purse, sorrel, chickweed, cerastium, etc., revealed.

A fact must be the vehicle of some humanity in order to interest us. Otherwise it is like giving a man a stone when he asks for bread. Ultimately the moral is all in all, and we do not mind it if inferior truth is sacrificed to superior, as when the annalist fables, and makes animals speak and act like men. It must be warm, moist, incarnated, have been breathed on at least. A man has not seen a thing who has not felt it.

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